A Blow at the Root.

OR, SOME OBSERVATIONS TOWARDS A DISCOVERY of the SUBTILTIES and DEVICES of Satan, practised against the Church and Truth of CHRIST;

AS

In all Ages, so in these times especially.

GEN. 3. 1. *Now the Serpent was more subtile than all the beasts of the field.*

2 COR. 2. 11. *Lest Satan should get an Advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.*

Febr. the 20. 1650.

I Have perused this Discourse, (intitled, *A Discovery of the subtilties of Satan, &c.*) with much satisfaction and contentment, and approving it to be very learned, solid and judicious, I doe Licence it to be Printed and published as well worthy the reading of all who desire to be satisfied by such a Discovery. *John Downam.*

London, Printed for *John Wright*, at the Kings Head in the Old-Baily. 1650.

Plan

To the impartiall and unprejudiced *Chriſtian-Reader.*

Reader,

MVch *might* be ſaid by way of *Apologie*, and ſomething by way of *Advertiſement*, concerning this following Treatiſe: but very little *muſt* bee ſpoken of either. The *enterpriſe* indeed is *vaſt*, and ſuch as might *diſcourage* a farre abler undertaker. (More troubleſome than that of *Mercurie's* (in the Fable,) when hee was to make a garment for the *Moon.*) The Subject being full of variety, multiformity, and inconſtancy. (And the Diſcoveries but *à poſteriori*, by Induction and Compariſon of things one with another.) Yet ſurely it lies upon All as a Duty, to doe their

part (as the good Soldier of *Chriſt*) againſt this great and common Enemy [the *Devill*:] but for *me*, as to *this* worke, I muſt confeſſe my ſelfe cenſurable (according to *Seneca*) in that I did not *Rem aggredi, ſed inſidere, &c.* not proceed to it by *choice*, but fell upon it (as it were) by chance: by ſome occaſions and impulſes of *Providence*, whereof I will not trouble every one with the Rehearſall. And this I may truly ſay, that amongſt the manifold Interruptions and Diſcouragements with which theſe poor endeavours have been *obſtructed*, none hath proved greater than the *averſeneſſe* of my own Spirit, from buſineſſe of this nature, eſpecially in this Iuncture of Affaires and Times. But the *ſcope* of this Buſineſſe is ſuch as will ſpeake for it ſelf, to all thoſe that love the Lord *Chriſt*, and his *Truth*; in ſincerity, *viz.* To weaken the practiſes of Satan againſt the Church and Truth of Chriſt, by ſome degree of *Obſervation* and *Diſcoverie*. For it is true of Deceits and Stratagems, which is but fabled of the *Baſiliske*, that if firſt eſpyed, they leeſe their life and force: but if they prevent, they endanger. And it is the charge which the Holy *Ghoſt* moſt inſiſts on, that we receive the Aſſaults of *Satan* with

with *Conſtancy*, *Watchfulneſſe* and *Circumſpection*. I looke to bee *cenſur'd* of *many*, as having applyed my ſelfe to *humour none*. *Some* poſsibly may think that theſe *Methods* of Satan are rather *Deviſed* than *Obſerved*. They ſay indeed that *Vir politicus etiam contemplationes ſerit*: It is very ordinary with pretenders to policy to aſcribe *Contingencies*, and unexpected ſurprizals of *Providence*, to ſome long-winded *Plots* and profound *Contrivances* of *men*. But as *I* am not of that Profeſsion, ſo neither am *I* of that Diſpoſition. The holy *Ghoſt* ſpeaks often of the *ſlights*, *tricks*, *methods*, and *ſtratagems* of Satan: and doe the viſible productions of the preſent Age, perſwade, that he hath now forgotten or diſuſed them? *Others* may imagine we impute *too much* to *Satan*, and ſeem to forget the Soveraignty and Supremacy of *God* (who orders all) and the Rationall conſtitution of *man* (who executes all of this nature.) *Anſw.* But they that are acquainted with the *Scriptures*, know, that Satan hath *his* Ends, [and they are alwayes evill and never good] and his Inſtruments likewiſe [good or bad men] have *their* Ends [which are ſometimes bad, and *ſometimes* good] and yet *God* hath

his Ends, infinitely beyond them all [which are *alwaies* good and *never* bad] infallibly governing the moſt irregular actions, of men and Devils, to his owne moſt holy purpoſes, without the leaſt infringement of the Creatures freedome. *Some*, againe, may ſuppoſe, that we gird at All that hath been held forth, ſince the beginning of theſe Times of Diſcurſion, under the termes of *Error*, *New-lights*, *&c.* But if ſo, *I* ſhould greatly contradict my ſelf, having ſpoken enough in ſundry paſſages of this Diſcourſe, to cleare me from that imputation. No, *I* acknowledge, (and give glory to God) many ſweet and precious clearings-up of *Old* Truths, but no Exhibitions of Truths that are properly *New*. *Others* may be diſpoſed to ſuſpect ſome ſecret Deſigne of traducing the Times, or cloſe arraignment of particular men. Whereas, the unprejudiced and obſervant Reader will finde, that (conſidering the Subject we are upon) wee have ſtood off very farre from that Rock, and diſcours'd of *Things*, as abſtractedly as might be, from *Perſons*. And where we have had occaſion to ſpeake of any thing that might ſeeme to referre to the Times, have gone further off

for

for examples, &c. But yet if any ſhould happen to ſee his own Picture, in any part of this Glaſſe, he may be for that, beholden to God and his owne Conſcience. It may alſo be imputed (by ſome) that wee doe but *actum agere*, undertake that which was done before. But truely this Buſineſſe was (upon the matter finiſhed, before *I* knew or heard of any thing of this nature (*I* confeſſe my ignorance) that was undertaken by any other. And the only, that *I* now know of, that hath pretended to this matter, is *Acontius*: whoſe Title when *I* firſt viewed, (which was not till the moſt of this was paſt the Preſſe) *I* confeſſe *I* began to thinke, that the buſineſſe was already done, and nothing further was to be deſired. (So great and promiſing is his *Title**:) But ſearching further into that *Booke* of his, *I* finde the *Stratagems* of *Satan Diſcovered* indeed therein, in ſundry things, but rather *juſtified* and ſubtilly *inſinuated* to the good-liking of men, than any way *reſiſted* or impugned. And a doore ſlily and cunningly opened to all manner of Hereſies, but eſpecially to *Socinianiſme*: Whereof the ſaid *Acontius* and *Bonfinius* are noted by *Pareus* (in one of his

* Satans Stratagems, Or the Devils Cabinet counſell diſcovered.

his *Epiſtles*) to be clandeſtine and ſubtile Champions. *Another* Diſcourſe there is entitled [*the Depths of Satan Diſcovered*] which is more ſincerely and faithfully performed, as to the point therein inſiſted on: which in this Diſcourſe of ours we but barely mentioned in ſome of the laſt *Obſervations*. But what is here tendred (good *Reader*) pleaſe to peruſe without prejudice. Conſidering *this*, That *I* intended at firſt a far more compendious diſpatch of all the Particulars to be handled, (ſomewhat proportionable to the ſix laſt Obſervations propounded.) As alſo that it was tranſmitted by pareells (at ſeverall times) to the Preſſe, whereby (having never had the whole Copy by mee) ſome things, I know, have eſcaped which beſpeak the exerciſe of your candor and indulgence. Beſide ſome things (unhappily) miſtaken at the Preſſe, whereof you ſhall finde the moſt materiall in a *Table* inſerted. *I* have not in this *Diſcourſe*) ſpoken of all things that ſhould have beene mentioned; and yet poſsibly of ſome things that might have been ſpared. Some therefore may thinke it too much, others not enough. But whatever it is my

hope

hope and ayme was (*pro tenuitate noſtra*) to doe *God* and the ſoules of his People ſome poore ſervice: in pointing out (and here and there endeavouring to oppoſe) the attempts of Satan againſt the Truth of *Chriſt*, and ſoules of *Chriſtians*. Who falls not under that Obſervation which a cleare *Theoriſt* makes, of ſome Politicians; *That the* Logicall *part of their minde is good, but the* Mathematicall *is erroneous*: (who can jndge well of *Conſequences*, but not of *Proportions* and *Compariſons* of things:) For Satan has the length of every ones Foot, and can fit every Perſon and Condition, as alſo all Times and Ages, with ſuitable Temptations. The *Lord* help us all to ſtand upon our Guard, and (in our proper Stations) with exerciſe of ſuitable graces, to obſerve and reſiſt him. And for mee, However *I* may fall ſhort of my Deſires and Expectations in regard of other ſucceſſes; yet *I* am bold to enſure my ſelfe of this, *Quòd alios excitabo meliora ad audendum*, (as *Voſſius* ſpeakes in an Epiſtle of his) *I* ſhall provoke ſome abler hand (by my bungling at it) with the more care, and

zeale (*I* hope) to Reſcue and doe Right to this buſineſſe, being of ſo high and generall concernment. Which *I* ſhould exceedingly rejoice in, and be ſincerely thankfull for.

——*Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis*
Candidus imperti; ſi non, his utere mecum.

A Table of the Contents.

CHAP. I. *That Satan hath in all ages carryed on an Intereſt of his owne, which ſtands in full oppoſition to that of God and Truth; hath managed it chiefely by ſubtilty and Impoſture. It is to be diſappointed by Diſcovery: which all Chriſtians ſhould endeavour. In order whereunto the enſuing Obſervations are intended.* page 1

CHAP. II. Obſerv. 1. *That Satan layes out his greateſt ſtrength againſt the profeſſed people of God, to ſeduce (if it were poſſible) the very Elect: labours to make them Inſtrumentall to his Ends, and to ſerve his Tarnes.* p. 3

The advantages he gets by this practice. p. 4, 5

Proved by experience of former and latter times. p. 6

CHAP. III. Obſ. 2. *That he may the more eaſily miſtead the people of God, he diſguiſeth his pernicious Deluſions into the Formes and Reſemblances of Divine light, Rare and high Diſcoveries of glorious Truth, &c, which hee compounds and convayes with ſome choice Notions (indeed) of Goſpel-myſteries.* p. 8, 9

That hee wrought thus by his Inſtruments in the Apoſtles times. p. 10

How to be diſcovered, and avoided, notwithſtanding their deceitfull and enticing way of working. p. 11, 12, 13

That even good men may be ſo far miſled, as to become pernicious Inſtruments of State, to miſlead others. p. 15

CHAP. IV. Obſer. 3. *That Satan takes and makes his advantage of certaine ſeaſons and opportunities, to carry on his plots againſt the Church, and to ſpread his Deluſions and Deceits.* p. 17

Times of Reformation. His Advantages thereby. 18

Three great Criſes *of Religion before Chriſt and Satan tooke Advantage of them All.* 1. *The giving of the Law.* 2. *Building of the firſt Temple.* 3. *A Return of the Captivity.* p. 18, 22

And likewise at the appearing of Christ. And the Reformation in Germany. p. 23
As also in these times of Reformation intended, p. 24
But (by the subtilty of Satan) now greatly disappointed. 25.27
CHAP. V. *Times of trouble and common calamities another Season, which subtile men are wont to make use of, to make great Innovations in Church and State.* p. 28.
The advantages Satan hath by these.
1. *He imployes his Instruments; Jesuits and others.* p. 29.32
2. *Is neither so much observed, nor opposed.* p. 33
Thus the Cæsars usurped upon the Romans.
Therefore Statists where they cannot finde them are wont to contrive troubles &c. p. 34
The policy of the Turks to destroy Christian-Religion among the Greeks. p. 35.
3. *In times of Trouble people are more prepared to receive any thing urg'd upon Conscience.* Ibid.
4. *And more disposed to Changes.* p. 36
CHAP. VI. Obj. 4. *Lest his practises and Impostures should be discovered, and so revealed by the light of the Word, He sets himselfe by all wayes and meanes against the Scriptures.* p. 37
True Religion, being not of Naturall or Rationall production, can be received originally from none but God, p. 38
Who at sundry times, and by severall Instruments hath given us his minde and will in Writing in the holy Scriptures, which are the Word of God. p. 39
The Titles of honor and Offices given the holy Scriptures. p. 48
Why so much opposed by Satan. Ibid.
That Satan practiseth against the Scriptures foure wayes.
1. *By hindring the passage of the Word to those that want it.* p. 41
2. *Opposing its Authority, with them that have it.* p. 43
And this, 1. *By the Profane and Atheisticall.* Ibid.
2. *By blasphemous Antiscripturists.* p. 44
3. *Superstitious Papists.* p. 45
4. *Scrupulous Rejecters of the Old Testament.* Ibid.
CHAP. VII. *The Scriptures of the Old Testament vindicated*

cated, and proved out of the Writings of the New. Objections answered. p. 46, &c.

Something concerning the Ceremonies of the Law. p. 53, 55, &c.

and the Old Covenant, p. 58.

CHAP. VIII. 3. *Practice, to corrupt, wrest, and deprave the Scriptures:* ——*an old practice, &c.* p. 63, &c.

performed three wayes.

1. *By adding to*
2. *Diminishing of* } *their proper sense.* p. 65, 66
3. *Disguising them from*

Some particular Scriptures notoriously abused by severall Sects. p. 67

The great danger of this practice in foure particulars.

1. *The Authority of the Scriptures (ordained as the meanes of salvation) becomes the Instrument of the souls destruction.* 68

2. *Such pretended Scripture-Authorities as encourage evill, are very greedily swallowed.* p. 70

(An Answer to Seducers that boast of their great successes, without the Magistrates Assistance.) p. 71, 72.

3. *It is a practice fitted to prevaile with the best and honest-hearted,* p. 73

4. *Errour so received, is stifly held, and seldome or never renounced.* p. 74

CHAP. IX. *The 4 Practice against the Scriptures to undermine, enervate, weaken them, and make them of none effect or efficacy, to assert Truth, or oppose Errour.* p. 76

This performed, { *Directly* { *in whole*—— / *Indirectly* { *in part.*——

——*In whole 4 wayes.* 1. *By turning all Scriptures into Allegories.* p. 76

Of Scripture Allegories; and places of the Old Testament strangely quoted and applyed in the New. p. 78, 80.

2. *By denying their immediate inspiration and infallibility.* 81

3. *By denying their sufficiency, without further Revelations, &c.* p. 82

1 Cor. 13. 11. *vindicated.* p. 83, &c.

4. *By charging them with obscurity.* p. 92

The turnes it serves to. p. 93
Objections answered. p. 95
Meanes to understand the Scriptures. p. 97
——*In part. When any particular part of the Word is so made of none effect.* 101
Indirectly. The Word of God is made of none effect two wayes. p. 102
1. *When the Scriptures are over-topt with by-Authorities.*
1. *Unwritten Traditions.* p. 103, &c.
2. *The Church.*
3. *Counsells.*
4. *Authorities of particular men, as Popes, Patriarchs, Fathers, Impostors, pretenders to Revelations, &c.*
5. *Vulgar carnall Principles.* p. 107
The devill a great gainer by them. p. 108, &c.
6. *Received Maxims and Opinions in Philosophy.* p. 110
7. *Naturall Reason.* p. 113, &c.
8. *Pretended Revelations.* p. 120
2. *More indirectly. When though the Scriptures are not renounced, and nothing be professedly set up to over-top them, yet they are not obeyed, &c.* ibid.
Chap. X. Obs. 3. *The true and onely rule of Religion (the holy Scriptures) being thus declined, corrupted and weakned, the most necessary and fundamentall Truths are Questioned and suspected; and the most dangerous evills in opinion and practice are likewise questioned and debated.* p. 122
The dangerousnesse of this practice. p. 124, &c.
The commands of it in these times. p. 128
Arguments against it. p. 132
Objections answered. 131, 132, 136
6. *Conclusions, concerning the different degrees of clearnesse or manifestation of Truth.* p. 132
4. *Cautions concerning the propounding of Doubts.* p. 132
Chap. XI. *Some advice to the people of God for their better settlement in the Truth, and security from seducing spirits, &c. in 9. Particulars.* 138.—134.
Fundamentalls in Religion of three sorts. p. 145

Of

Of triall of Opinions by Disputations. p. 146

CHAP. XII. Obs. 6. *That Satan having so shaken and shatter'd all Truth by Skepticisme and Questioning further labours to introduce and assert those Principles, which are most opposite to Gods revealed Counsells; and which are also in their nature comprehensive and productive of all manner of Evills both in faith and manners.* p. 150

Obser. 7. *That hee endeavours to implant and establish such principles in the very conscience.* p. 157

Obser. 8. *That he endeavoureth an universall and perpetuall exemption of all his Agents (that labour in his worke, of seducing soules) from the Power and Authority of the Civill Magistrate, that so no Reformation may hereafter take hold of them.* And that Truth for ever be put out of Protection. p. 157

Obs. 9. *Labours to turne aside the Princes and Civill Powers of the world from knowing and following their true proper Interest; and to engage them in designes that cannot stand with the Interest of true Religion, thereby to raise Persecution against the Church, indirectly; under the notion of non-Complyance, Sedition, Faction, &c.* p. 158

Obs. 10. *That he makes choice and use of Instruments that are of temper and condition fit to carry on the severall parts of his worke.* p. 159

Obs. 11. *Lest hee should bee disappointed in his purposes any more (as he hath been often) by the faithfulnesse and activity of Gods Ministers, he labours mightily to break and ruine the Ministerie, and to bring the Office it selfe into contempt, to take away the meanes of maintenance, and to destroy humane Learning.* p. 162

Obser. 12. *That Satan contrives manifold Diversions whereby to fill up the time and thoughts of all Gods people (Ministers and others) with troublesome, fruitlesse impertinent knots, snarls, and intricate questions, (concerning things Civill, or appertaining to Religion) thereby to take them off from their more proper and necessary work.* p. 163

Good

GOod Reader, Correct these *Errata* which are most materiall; for otherwise you read the Printers over-sights, not the Authors sense.

PAge 30. line 34. blot out *to study*. p. 31. l. 1. in the Margent. for *Univers.* read *versatilis*. p. 36. l. ult. r. *some* of those. p. 54. l. 34 for *those*, r. *these*. p. 63. l. 24. r. *In pursuance*. p. 64. l. 7. for *ready* r. *readily*. in the Marg. l. 18. for *when* r. *where*. p. 65. l. 3. r. *Even so*. p. 71. l. 22. for *Nicks*, r. *Inches*. p. 72. l. 15. r. *reap*. and l. 18. r. *nights*. p. 79. l. 9. r. *But* consisting. p. 84. l. 31. r. face *of* God. p. 86. l. 35. for *he* r. *it*. p. 90. l. 3. for *wrapt* r. *rapt*. In the Marg. (in sundry places) for *Ber* r. *Beza*. p. 91. Marg. l. 24. r. † 2 Joh. 10. p. 93. l. 10. for *his*, r. *this*. p. 95. Mar. l. 13. for *inaccess.* r. *accessible*. p. 100. Mar. Ital. p. 102. l. 14. for *divulged* r. *indulged*. p. 103. l. 18. for *make* r. *mate*. and l. 31. r. *Counsels*. and (the same line) r. *like a*. p. 105. l. 22. del. *Montanus*. p. 111. l. 26. for *ports* r. *pores* and l. 1. of the under Mar. r. *pronuncint*. p. 124. l. ult. r. *introduce*. p. 125. l. 31. r. But *that is*. p. 126. l. 7. r. *by the*.

Divers more there be, which those that shall finde may easily amend.

Some few Obſervations towards a Diſcovery of the ſubtleties of Satan, practiſed againſt the Church and Truth of Chriſt, as in all Ages, ſo in theſe times eſpecially.

CHAP. I.

That the Devill hath ever menaged an Intereſt, contrary to that of God and Godlineſſe; hath carried it on chiefely by ſubtlety and Impoſture, and is therefore to bee oppoſed and diſappoimed by Diſcovery, which all Chriſtians ſhould endeavour: In order whereunto the enſuing Obſervations are tendred.

THere is none of *Experience* in the way of *Chriſt*, or acquainted with his *Word*, but *knoweth* very well, that as there bee the *deep things of God*, (a) wherein the largeſt *ſoule* may *loſe* it ſelfe, and *Mortality* be ſwallowed up of *life*, ſo there are likewiſe certain (b) *Depths of Satan*, *which drown many men in Deſtruction and Perdition.* The great and glorious *myſterie of godlineſſe*, having ever been by him (c) *oppoſed*, with an abſtruſe and ſubtle (d) *myſterie of Iniquity*, an *Artificiall* frame of *Darknes*, which the Lord hath promiſed, *to reveale and conſume*, (and by revealing he doth conſume it) *with the Spirit of his mouth, and the brightneſſe of his comming.*

But, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh of the *hidden wiſedome* of *God*; (e) that *if the Princes of this world had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory:* So may wee likewiſe affirme,

a τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ. 1 Cor. 2. 10.

b τὰ βάθη τοῦ Σατανᾶ. Rev. 2. 24.

1 Tim. 6. 9.

c 2 Theſ. 2. 7.

d There hath ever been an irreconcilable warfare between *Michael* and the *Dragon*, the Devill purſuing no other intereſt, but to thwart and counter-work GOD in all his proceedings. Rev. 12. 7.

e 2 Cor. 2. 7, 8.

concerning theſe *Myſteries* and *Depths* of *Satan*, That if the *Men* of the *World* (much more thoſe *called out* of the *world*) did but *know* them, and well *conſider* of them, they would not ſo eaſily be *taken* by this *Prince* of *Darkneſſe*.

But this great *Revolter* being *profound to make ſlaughter*, is *ſubtle* as *malicious*, to eccliſpe the *Glorie* of the *Eternall* in deſtroying *ſoules*. This is his ordinary *Worke*, and the *chiefe* (*f*) *Buſines*, indeed, he imployeth himſelfe in: (we have it in ſhort, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *to devoure* and *ſwallow up*,) and his uſuall *way* of *working* is not ſo much by *Strength*, as *Subtlety*. Thus he *began* his worke of Confuſion in the world, and thus he *carrieth it on*. His firſt appearing to our firſt *Parents*, was *not* in the forme of a *Lion* by his ſtrength to *terrifie* or inforce them, but in the forme of a *Serpent* by ſubtlety to *beguile* them. Nor doth *He*, or his *Inſtruments*, ordinarily ſhew themſelves in *that* ſhape, untill they have throughly *menaged* and runne through *this*. And therefore the Holy *Ghoſt* ſpeaking often of his *practices*, thereby to *warne*, and ſo *arme* us againſt them, doth not tell us ſo much of his *Power*, *Malice*, and *Induſtrie*, as of his *Artifice*, *Falſhood*, and *Cunning*: warneth us much of his *Sleights* and (*g*) *Craftines*, (*h*) *Tricks* and *Devices*, (*i*) *Wiles* and *Deluſions*, whereby he lyeth in wait to *deceive*, and by deceiving to *deſtroy* poore deluded *undiſcerning* ſouls. Although indeed he *aboundeth* in both *ſubtlety* to *take his* Prey, and *ſtrength* to *hold* it; for his *working is with all Power, and Signes, and lying wonders*, 2 Theſ. 2. 11.

Impoſture then, and Deceit being his *Maſter-piece*, the moſt effectuall *oppoſition* that can bee made againſt him, muſt needs bee by *Diſcovery*. For *Darknes* is ſufficiently *reſiſted* with the approaches of *Light*, and *Deceit* by *Detection*. So that, although his *Diſguiſes* bee ſo various, *ſubtle* and *tranſcendent*, that indeed no mans *Obſervation* can reduce them to an exact *Scale*, (for *His wayes are ſo moveable that wee cannot ſo know them*,) Yet even *this* His Variety and Subtlety, in all his Wiles and *Methods* (as the Apoſtle calls them, Epheſ. 6. 11.) is to be *obſerved* and knowne of every *Chriſtian*, (as farre as the *Father* and *Fountaine of Light* ſhall be pleaſed to *diſcover* them) that ſo we may diſcharge our *Duty* in the day of Encounter.

§ As God hath given us his bleſſed Truth, for the meanes of our ſalvation:-ſo the devills deſignes againſt the Truth are ſubordinate to ſoules deſtruction. Gen. 3. 2 Cor 11. 3.

g πανουργία. Eph. 4 14.
h ἐν πανουργίᾳ Cheating or cogging as at Dice.
i μεθοδείας τῆς πλάνης. Eph. 6. 11.

counter, *the evill day*; and that is, to *withstand them*, and having done all, *to stand*. Whether therefore he appeares in the forme of a *Lion* or a *Serpent*, he must bee *resisted* and withstood: and that we may resist him, we must be very vigilant and observant of him. *Be sober, be vigilant*, saith the Apostle, *for your adversary the Devill, as a roaring Lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devoure, whom resist, stedfast in the Faith, &c.* In order therfore unto these *Duties*, the ensuing *Observations* are humbly *tendred*, as a *helpe* to such poore soules as the Lord shall dispose to make *use* of them, to prevent such *aavantages* as Satan may get, by our *Ignorance* or Negligence *of his Devices*.

Eph. 6.

1 Pet. 5. 8, 9.

2 Cor. 2. 11.

CHAP. II.

That Satan bendeth his Designe, principally against the professed People of God, to seduce, if possible, the very Elect, to defection in Judgement or Practice, or both: And singleth out those amongst them, especially, whose weaknesse or disadvantages render them easiest to be seduced.

FIrst of all, this Subtlety of *Satan* may be *observed*, that although it be his Designe and Practice (if he could) to destroy *All*, (for he deserves his Title of *Abaddon* and *Apollyon*) yet he layeth out the *Strength* of his Endeavours against the professed *People* of *God*, to corrupt and *seduce*, *if* it were *possible*, *the very Elect* (*a.*) The *rest* of Man-kinde hee knoweth he still *hath*, and therefore careth but to *keep* them: but *These* he looketh at as *lost*, and escaped from him, and therefore layeth out to *recover* and regaine them. To preserve and *retaine* those he *hath*, needs but *Ordinary* endeavours; but to catch and *entangle* those *againe* that were once (*b*) *escaped*, drawes out the *uttermost* of his *Power* and *Cunning*. And therefore when *other* mens *Temptations* are but *Ordinary* and common, (for, alas, *he* (*c*) *taketh them Captives at his will*) we shall find, He makes a *Businesse* of recovering and taking in the *Professors* of the Truth; He *sits* downe with *All* his strength about the *People* of *God*, builds

Observ. 1.

a Mar. 13. 22.

b 2 Per. 2. 20.

c Tim. 2. 26.

builds *ſtrong Holds*, caſteth up high works, *High things* againſt them; undermines them with *deep* Reaſonings and *ſubtle* Imaginations, makes uſe of *all* his *Stratagems* againſt *them*, aſſaults them one while with *fiery Darts*, mighty and terrible Temptations, and then againe *ſifts* them with ſoft and *inſinuating* ſuggeſtions, ſecret and ſubtle *perſwaſions*, thereby to entice and get *within* them, and ſo prevaile againſt them. The men of the *World*, he gathers up as it were in his *way*, whereſoever he findes them, but he *Hunteth* after the People of *God*, coaſteth up and downe to *ſeek* out them, that he may *devoure* them. So our *Saviour* to *Peter*, *Simon, Simon, Satan hath* (d) *deſired you, to ventilate and ſift you as Wheat*. And *Peter* remembreth his *charge*, and *ſtrengthens his Brethren* againſt the ſame Danger, with the like Caution, 1 *Pet.* 5. *Be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe the Devill your Adverſary* (e) *walkes up and downe, &c.* Hee is the *Enemy* of *all* man-kinde, but the *Adverſary* of *Gods People* in a farre more eminent and remarkable manner, alwayes *practiſing* againſt them, to cauſe them to *fall*, into ſome pernicious *Opinions*, or dangerous uncomfortable and ſcandalous *practices*, to the great diſhonour of *God*, and the *enſnaring* of their owne and others *ſoules*.

As the *Philiſtims* did by *Sampſon*. Jud. 16. 5.

Luke 22. 31. d ὁ Σατανᾶς ἐξῃτήσατο ὑμᾶς τοῦ σινιάσαι ὡς τὸν σῖτον:— *Expetivit vos.*

e ὁ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν διάβολος.

And by this ſubtlety of his Satan contriveth for himſelf and his Intereſt a five-fold advantage.

1. *Firſt*, hereby he doth moſt highly *affront* the bleſſed Majeſty of *God*, in raiſing up *Trouble* diſhonour and prejudice, to his Glory Goſpell and People, even *out of his owne Houſe*. This was one of *Davids* ſoreſt ſufferings. It troubled (f) *Cæſar* more than to loſe his *life*, that his Sonne *Brutus* ſhould bee one of his *Executioners*. And although *God* himſelfe be farre above all the Plots and Practices of *Satan*, yet as the ſoul ſuffereth in the body, ſo doth *Chriſt* ſuffer in and by his *Members*, through the malicious practiſing of *Satan* againſt him in *them*. It is much to *Gods* diſhonour, to be injured by his *Enemies*, but much *more*, to have his owne *Children* and ſervants (that *hee hath formed for his praiſe* (g) corrupted and ſeduced to lift up their Heele againſt Him.

2 Sam. 12. 11.

f Sueton.

g Iſa. 43. 21, 24

2. Herein *Satan* may *glory* and greatly *pride* himſelfe, that as

a God

a God (*h*) he carryeth on his *Intereſt* and Worke, even by the hands of thoſe that *profeſſe* (and perhaps intend) to *oppoſe* it. He *deſtroies* the *Goſpells* Intereſt by the *Goſpels friends*, and governeth the Proceedings of his declared *Enemies* to ſerve turns moſt oppoſite to their Intentions, even his *advantage*, and *their owne* great *dammage*, if not utter *Ruine*.

h Iſa. 10 7. Acts 4. 28.

3. Hereby he greatly *blemiſheth* the *honour* and reputation of the *Church* of *Chriſt*, brings them into *an ill report* and opinion of thoſe that are yet without, and cauſeth the *Truth* and *People* of *God* to be queſtioned of the weak, reproached and blaſphemed by the open *enemy*, & (as the reſult of all) layeth a *ſtumbling block* in the way of thoſe that are yet without, who for ought wee know, might have bin *won* and gained to the Church. All which is much for the Intereſt of Satan, and againſt that of Chriſt. See 1 *Tim.* 3. 7. *c.* 5. 14. *Tit.* 2. 5. 1 *Pet.* 3. 1, 2.

How is it likely that Truth ſhould be embraced of the World, when ſhe ſhall bee condemned & abandoned of her owne children?

4. By this meanes he greatly *weakeneth* the *Kingdome* and Houſhold of God, by *dividing it againſt it ſelfe*, Matth. 12. 25. whilſt the *Church* is *broken* into *Parties* and Factions, and their diſaffections and *differences* branded and *ſealed* up with the impreſſion of *provoking* or diſreliſhing *Names* and *Titles*. Which therefore the Apoſtles laboured againſt, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3, 4. *Whereas there is among you envying ſtrife and factions, are ye not carnall? while one ſaith I am of Paul, another I am of Apollo, Are yee not carnall?* This is a great advantage to Satan, and diſadvantage to the Intereſt of the Goſpell, that wee ſuffer him by his Inſtruments *Committere noſmet inter nos*, to ſet us together by the eares amongſt our ſelves, whilſt he often-times *lurcheth* away *that* which we ſeem to *contend* for.

En quo diſcordia Cives perdidit miſeros.

5. And laſtly, He knoweth well enough, that *this* is the moſt likely *expedient* and meanes, to *credit ſtrengthen* and *propagate* his *Intereſt* within the very *Churches* of *Chriſt*, and Houſhold of *God*. viz. To raiſe up amongſt *themſelves*, and of their owne number, ſuch as ſhall carry on his Deſignes, Start and Patronize corrupt *Principles* and *Opinions*, or example and countenance evill and ſcandalous *practices*; (*i*) for that will be eaſily *received* and well thought of, from one that is *approved* and well eſteemed amongſt *our ſelves*, which would be greatly ſcrupled and *reſiſted*,

i *Fallacia, falſa ſpes & ſtratagema quodcunq; facile Hoſti perſuadetur per homines ſubornatos, illi notos & familiares.* Thucyd.

ſted if tendred and obtruded upon us by a *ſtranger* or an *enemy*. As therefore Politick *Princes* are not ſparing of any meanes whereby to gaine to their Party, the principall Miniſters of *State*, (or to prefer of their *Partie* to ſuch employment) under that *Prince* whoſe Deſignes they *feare*, or againſt whom they *practiſe*; accounting of ſuch as their *Confidents*, on whoſe truſt they may rely, and who may act for them moſt *effectually* and eaſily without *ſuſpition* (*k*); So doth *Satan* plot and attempt by all meanes poſſible, to corrupt the profeſſed People and *Friends* of *God*, from *underſtanding* and *following* the true *Goſpell-Intereſt*, and to ingage them in ſuch *wayes* as ſhall greatly *advance* his *Deſignes* and undertakings *againſt* the Royall Scepter of the *Lord Jeſus*.

k So *David* employed his truſty friend *Huſhai*, with *Abſolom*: and to very good purpoſe. 2 Sam. 15.33, 34, 35. and Ch. 16. 18, 19. and Ch. 17. 14. For hereby the good Counſell of *Achitophel* was defeated.

And doth not all *Experience* (that of *theſe times* eſpecially) witneſſe, that this hath been the *Devills* conſtant *practice*? Was there ever any *Perſon* or People whom the Lord made uſe of for any extraordinary *ſervice*, that *Satan* did not greatly *tamper* with, to corrupt and *act* them *againſt God*, and the work that God called them to, and deſigned them for? Did hee ſpare *Moſes*, or *David*, or *Jeremiah*, or *Jonah*, *Nehemiah*, or *Paul*, or *Chriſt* himſelfe? No, his practices are *Demonſtrable* upon *all* theſe, and his *Impreſſions* upon ſome. Hath not *Auguſtine*, *Luther*, and many others the faithfull ſervants of *Jeſus* Chriſt, left ample *teſtimonies* unto this Truth upon their owne ſad *experiences*? And for *us*, and *our Times*, doe we not every where *ſee*, and heavily *feele*, the ſad *effects* of this ſubtle *practice* of his, in this our miſerably tattered *Church* and *Nation*? Wherein, whether his endeavours have more prevailed in hardening the hearts of the *wicked* and *prophane* Party againſt the *Truth*, or in *corrupting* the Judgements, and looſening the Principles and Practice of many of the *godly* Party from the *Truth*, ſeems very *difficult* to determine. For ſurely, were the *Queſtion* put, *Who*, or what ſort of men they were, that *firſt* adventured to *ſtart* the *Principles*, which have ſince *ſpawned* in our troubled Waters, this numberleſſe *Frie* of new *Opinions*, (and whoſe *Influence* upon ſuccedent Productions, *ſtrange* as the *World* hath knowne, is yet *remarkable*,) as *alſo*, who they were that were *firſt* laboured and *prevailed*

vailed with, to embrace them, and *comply* with them? With griefe of Heart we muſt *acknowledge*, they were Both of the *Godly party*, and of thoſe amongſt them too, that were *profeſſed* and *reputed* of *tender* Spirits and *Conſciences*. And are not *theſe* the perſons, from time to time, *ſingled* out, and looked at, as the *fitteſt* Objects to be *wrought* upon by them? Did they *chooſe* to deale with the *Atheiſticall* or *Prophaner* ſort of People, the profeſſed *Oppoſers* of *Religion* and Godlineſſe? Surely no; few or none of thoſe were *drawne in* to theſe new *Opinions*, till theſe *Opinions* were *drawne out* to their *Practices*. *They* never approved of *theſe* mens ſayings, till *theſe* grew up to *juſtifie* their *doings*. But if any were taken notice of to be lately *wrought upon* by the Miniſtery of the *Word*, or to be *troubled* in Spirit, *unſatisfied* or ſcrupled in their *Conſcience*, darkned with *Temptations*, or *weak* and *unſetled* in their *judgements*, or (eſpecially if) under any unhappy *Ingagements* that might diſpoſe them to a *change*, (ſuch as many might be mentioned) Theſe were the *ſubjects* they applyed themſelves unto, and that in ſuch a *way*, as might beſt ſuit with their preſent *Conditions*. And with many of theſe have ſo farre *prevailed*, that *ſad* though it be, yet *ſooth* it is to ſay, *The many wounds and ſcarres* wherewith *Truth* is *diſfigured* in theſe our unhappy dayes, are *thoſe with which ſhe hath been wounded in the Houſe of her Friends*.

Nor is this ſucceſſe of *Satans* upon the *profeſſors* of Truth, the onely *Prodigie* of theſe latter dayes, (a part of whoſe *Character* is, that *Men ſhould have a forme of godlineſſe, and yet bee denyers of the power thereof, creeping into Houſes, and leading Captive ſilly women laden with ſinnes, and led away with divers Luſts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; men of corrupt mindes, reſiſting*, and ſtanding up againſt *the Truth*, not to be approved, but *reprobate concerning the Faith*, and yet in appearance great ſticklers for the *Faith*:) But upon ſearch we ſhall finde, that *God* and his *Truth* and *Glory* hath often *ſuffered* more from his profeſſed *Friends*, than from declared *Enemies*. *For paſſe over the Iſles of Chittim*, *and ſee; and ſend unto Kedar and conſider diligently and ſee if there bee ſuch a thing. Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which* 2 Tim. 3. 5, 6, 7, 8. Jer. 2. 10.

yet

yet are no Gods? (their Religion was firme enough as long as it was falſe :) *But My People hath changed their Glorie:—Be aſtoniſhed, O yee heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, &c.* Jer. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Satan alwayes *hath*, and ſtill *doth* labour, (might and maine) to *corrupt* the *friends* of Truth from the *Truth*, and to engage the People of *God againſt* their God, their *Goſpell*, their *Glory*, their true *Intereſt*. That is our firſt *Obſervation*.

CHAP. III.

That Satan, the more eaſily to miſlead the People *of God, ſubtly worketh up his Impoſtures into the Formes and Reſemblances of Divine* Light *and* Truth : *which he ſometimes conveyeth in and with ſome choice and cleare* Diſcoveries *of ſpeculative Truths indeed, and Goſpell-Myſteries.*

Obſer. II. BUt whereas ſuch as Declare themſelves for *God*, and profeſs themſelves his *People*, are very ſeldome ſo farre to bee corrupted as (with *Porphirie* or *Julian*) to *turne* profeſsed *Apoſtates*, and to *flie directly* in the *face* of Religion and *Chriſt* himſelfe with horrid and monſtrous *Aſſaults*; but on the *Contrary*, That to the *Children* of *Light*, every glimpſe and ſparke of *Light* and *Truth* is very deare and *precious*; and what ever *appeares* to be of *God*, and for their poore *ſoules* good, is thirſtily drawne in, *freely* and heartily *entertain'd* into their very ſoules and *ſpirits*; This ſubtle *Adverſarie* therefore being full of *Artifice* and *Cunning*, (*able to transforme himſelfe into an Angel of Light*) and working with all *deceiveablenes*, transformes and *ſublimates* his poyſonous *Impoſtures*, into the moſt pleaſing Formes and *Appearances* of ſaving *Truthes*; yea, of *extraordinarie*, high, Seraphicall *Notions* and Diſcoveries thereof; which are ever ſo much the more *dangerous* and Deſtructive, by how much the nearer they come to the *Reſemblance*, without the very *Nature* and ſubſtance of *Truth* it ſelf. For who is hee that would be *cheated* with a piece of *Braſſe* or *Iron*, to take it in ſtead of *Silver*? Yet let that baſer Metall be

2 Cor. 11. 14.

Sæpe latet vitium proximitate boni.

forged

forged into the forme and similitude of *currant* money, let the Impression and Superscription be answerable, &c. and it shall *passe* in tale with other money, from hand to hand, even with many *good* chapmen.

And who is there among *Christians*, that would take up a *Doctrine*, that had the very visible *Image*, and *manifest* superscription of the *Devill* upon it? But being gilded over with *pretence* of glorious *light*, and having the *Name* of *God* imprinted thereon, set off also with some choice and usefull *Truths* indeed, no wonder if some, (even good *Christians*) bee for a time *deceived* therewith. And this, believe it, is his *usuall* way of working.

Even as some *cheating* Impostor might shew and sell you a piece or two of choice and *excellent* Merchandise, therewith to *put off* many others that are *base* and naught, made up in forme and fashion of the best: Or as subtle and secret *empoysoners* convey their deadly *Doses*, compounded with wholsome *Physicke*, or under Covert of some savoury *Dish*, (thereby *killing* with that which was appointed and prescribed for *Cure* or nourishment) So doth this great Deceiver and *Murderer* of soules, mingle his poysonous Principles, the *Doctrines of Devills*, with the very *Truth* of *God*, the appointed food and Physick of our *soules*, that so we may draw in *death* with open mouth, *without* scruple or *suspition*.

Now the *subtilety* and Deceit of this Practice lyeth in *this*, *Fraus sibi in parvis fidem praestruit, ut majore emolumento fallat*. Take a man off his Guard, and turne his *Caution* into *Confidence* of you, and, if so disposed, you *abuse* him to purpose. Now by these *mixtures* of some choice and usefull *Truths*, clearely and vividly held out, honest hearts, (who for the most part are lesse *suspitious*) are taken off their *Guard* and watchfulnesse, and their *soules* are much *enlarged* and carried out, not onely in Love but *Confidence*, towards such as bring such *good tidings*: They know *something* they say is true, and *believe* no lesse of the *rest*; and so they are abused by *Satan*, and made to swallow many *poisonous* mixtures, to the great *distempering* of their *spirits*, and no lesse hazard of their *Soules*.

That *he* went *this way* to worke by his *Inſtruments* of *Old*, is evident from *holy* Scriptures. We ſhall not need goe further backe than the *Apoſtles* dayes for full proofe thereof. Thoſe *ſeducers* mentioned *Act.* 15. 1. by whom the Devill laboured the *Confuſion* of the *Goſpell* under *colour* of *Incorporating* with the Law of *Ceremonies*, did they not urge it as a *Truth*, as a Fundamentall *ſaving Truth? Except yee bee Circumciſed* (ſay they) *after the manner of Moſes, yee cannot bee ſaved.* Which being preſſed upon ſuch *Termes*, and delivered with *Confidence* and *Authority*, together with ſome undenyable *Goſpell*-Doctrines, (unqueſtionable truths *indeed*) was both readily *received*, and ſtiffely held and *maintained* (as falſe and *new* fangled *Doctrines* are wont to be) by thoſe Brethren that heard it. It *occaſioned* much Diſſention, many *Diſputations* at *Antioch*. Yea, *Paul* and *Barnabas* were not able to *prevaile* againſt it (*a*): But the Queſtion muſt be *referred* to the Deciſion of the *Apoſtles* and Elders in a full *Councell* at *Jeruſalem*, v. 2. And *there*, it ſhould ſeem, there were *ſome* too that ſtickled hard (*b*) *for it*; and it proved a *buſineſſe* of no ſmall Weight and *Importance* at length to ſuppreſſe it.

a Acts 15. 2.

b v. 5.

And thoſe *falſe* Apoſtles, *Deceitfull* Workers, the *Devils* ableſt *Enginiers*, with whoſe *rude* and unworthy Carriage *Holy Paul* was ſo much troubled, and of whom he ſo ſadly (*c*) *complaineth*, did they not pretend themſelves to be the *Miniſters* of *Chriſt*? They preacht *Jeſus*, Goſpel, *Spirit*, and *New* (*d*) Lights, and (*d*) *boaſted of this without meaſure*, deſpiſing the Miniſterie of the *true* Apoſtles of *Chriſt*; Inſomuch, that *Paul* himſelf was conſtrained to *ſpeake* more freely than ordinary, and *more* than he ſeems to thinke could *become* him, pleading hard with the *Corinthians* by way of *Aſſertion* of his owne *Miniſterie*, which thoſe wretched Seducers had taught them (it ſeemes) to call in Queſtion, if not flatly to deny. (Heare him ſpeak for himſelfe, 2 *Cor.* 11. 23. with Chap. 10. 12.) Whereas, all that while, they did but *deceive* poor ſoules, *beguile* and *corrupt* them by their *Deluſions*, from the *ſimplicity* that is in *Chriſt*.

c 2 Cor. 11, 13. 23. ſee v. 4.

d 2 Cor. 10 10, 12, 15.

And the Holy *Ghoſt* elſewhere diſcovereth very plainely, the Meanes that *he* and his *Inſtruments* uſe to put off ſuch their

Impoſtures

Impostures and Deceits: namely, by *good* words, and *faire* speeches. That place, *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. is worth our Considering. *Now I beseech you Brethren*, saith the Apostle, *to marke them which cause Divisions and Offences*, contrary *to*, *or* against *the Doctrine which yee have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their owne belly: and by good words and faire speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* Where we have a *short*, but *full* and lively *Character* and Description of *Seducers*: together with *Counsell* and Direction from *God*, how to carry it towards them. They are *Described*, First, from their *out-side*; that part of their *worke* which is externally *visible* and notorious; that which *every* one takes *notice* of them for, and whereby they may be knowne where ere they become; and that is to *Divide*. They *cause Divisions* amongst you *Brethren*, believers: *Factions* or *Parties* standing at a *distance* (saith the (*e*) Text) so that *one* ground, one *Church* can no longer hold you. And as a *meanes* to this, they *make* stumbling blocks, they *worke*, frame, or devise *scruples* and exceptions against the *Doctrine* which yee have *learned*, saith the Apostle. *Secondly*, he turnes and shewes you their *in-side*; (which every one cannot discerne) both of their *Persons* and *Workes*. They *pretend* (it may be) to be the *servants* of *Christ* in an *extraordinary* manner, but they *are not* (saith the Apostle) (*f*) *They serve* not *the Lord Jesus Christ*. No? not Christ, whom then? Why their *owne* ends, and *Interests*, their owne *Belly*. Yea but they *teach* and instruct others——*No*, saith the Holy *Ghost*, they doe but *deceive* them; they seduce and *mislead* (*g*) People. What *sort* of *People*? (thats the *Third* particular) The *Persons* upon whom they *practise* and *prevaile* are good *honest Hearts*, *well-meaning* soules, of *Good* Natures, *simple* or single-hearted, *without evill*, (as the word (*h*) *first* signifieth, harmlesse, *innocent* Creatures, without *fraud*, and without *suspition* of fraud in those they deale (*i*) with (and so not *circumspect* and watchful;) *These*, saith the *Apostle*, (and we finde it true enough) those Instruments of *Satan* ἐξαπατῶσι, doe seduce, *lead* them *out* of the *way*, the right way; in which those poore honest soules were going, and *plodding* on very diligently, till they met with these offi-

Rom. 16. 17, 18

e τὰς διχοστασίας.

καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα ποιοῦντας.

f Χριστῷ οὐ δουλεύουσιν, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἑαυτῶν κοιλίᾳ.

g ἐξαπατῶσι.

τὰς καρδίας τῶν ἀκάκων.

h ἄκακος. *Corda hominum minime malorum.* Beza *Transl.*

i *Erasm.*

cious *guides*, who making them believe they were in a *wrong* way, and *pretending* (with a great deale of Love and *pitty* to their *soules*) to set them *right*, lead them quite *out* of the *path* of Life. *Strange!* but how doe they goe to worke to *doe* this? The *Apostle* tells us (*Fourthly*) the Manner *how*, and the Meanes whereby they prevaile. *By good words and faire speeches.* The words are so *comprehensive* in the *Greek*, that *Beza* complaines, *Latine* is too *narrow* to render them without long circumlocution. But briefely *thus*, The former signifieth *Savourie*, usefull, sweet, *profitable* and **gracious speeches, Good words*, (as the new Translation) Discourse of *Good* and usefull things, such as *make* those poore *simple* soules *believe*, that these men (that offer to guide them into their way) wholly minde *their* spirituall *good*, not regarding their *owne* advantages.

διὰ τῆς χρηστολογίας, καὶ εὐλογίας.

* ἡ χρηστὸς is Translated. 1 Pet. 2. 3.

Per sermones dulces & benedictiones. Trem.

And the *other* expression, εὐλογία, importeth no lesse, but *faire speeches, Blessings*, such as are without *all* exception, (to see too) such as it would doe one *good* to heare, they are *so* sweet and *so* good. *Good words* and *faire* speeches (observe it well) these *Impostors* and dangerous *Deceivers* are very *notable*, and singularly *excellent* at: the Apostle *Describes* them by them, it is a piece of their *Character*.

Cubric. Manes, that Persian *Arch-heretick*, was so good at this, that hee was called by his Disciples *Manichæus. q. Mannæ effusor*; as if his lips had poured out nothing but *Manna*, his words were so sweet unto them. So *Sixt. Senens. l. oct. B. S.* compounding the Name, it seems of Hebr. and Gr. whereas that of *Epiphanius* better became him, *Manichæus. q.* ὁ μανίας χέων, powring out madnesse, *l. 2. T. 2. Contra Hær.*

And therefore no wonder if (*lastly*) he gives *Counsell* from *Christ*, to all that are *Christs*, how to *carry* it towards them. *Two* things are to be done, and the *Apostle* is very *earnest* with us, that we omit neither of them. First, *Observe them*. Secondly, *Avoid them* or *decline from them*. He beggeas us to both. *Now I beseech you brethren marke them, &c.* Why, what are *they* to be *so* looked at? They except against *some things* that we have been *taught* indeed, and *draw* a few after them into their *Opinions*, but they hold the *Foundation*, they are *Christians* still, and wee see no great *hurt* they doe.——Oh yee doe not *know* them, nor what their *principles* and *ends* be, or *what* they

σκοπεῖν ——— καὶ ἐκκλίνειν ἀπ' αὐτῶν

will

will bring your Church *to* , but I do (saith *Paul*) and *God* doth, and from *him* I *advise* you, and *beseech* you, *marke them*, observe them. How? to *grow* into *acquaintance* with them, and to make Discovery of all their Principles and wayes how yee like them? *No*, saith the Apostle, *Marke them*, and *Avoid* them, *Get out of their way*, (as the *same* word is Translated in another place of the same (*k*) *Epistle*) for they have such *good* words, and such faire *enticing* speeches, that like *Sirens* they may enchant and *seduce* you, as they do by many poore deluded souls to their utter ruine.

But *whence* have they *these* (*l*) things? these *taking* words? these sweet and *winning* speeches? The Holy *Ghost*, by *Peter* tels us how they come by them, (*lest* any should *thinke* they are of *God*, or the Enlargements of the *Spirit* of God) They are *made* words, *formed* and feigned as it were of Paste or *Plaister*, or by the *Potters* Art. *And through Covetousnesse shall they with* feigned *words make merchandise of you*, saith the *Apostle*; where by *Covetousnesse* we understand, not a Desire of *Money*, but a *greedinesse* of winning *soules* to their Partie; and such a strong Desire there is in those of *Satan* and *Antichrists* Party*, and that manage his *Interest*, that as *Merchants* for worldly *profit*, so they *compasse Sea and Land* to make Proselytes, to make *one* Proselyte, (saith our (*m*) Saviour) and when he is *made*, make him *twofold* more the Child of Hell than themselves. Thus the *Devill* drives a *Trade* for *soules*: and, as *crafty-Tradesmen* have their many *made words* and plausible *perswasions*, whereby to *utter* their *Deceitfull Wares*, in exchange for something of better worth: So *his Factors*, seducing spirits, with many *good words*, faire speeches & *fawning carriages*, put off his *counterfeit* truths and *false Lights*, (the very *Doctrines of Devills*) to mauy poore honest Creatures, thereby to gaine their Soules. So that if the *Lord* not shew them their *Errour* and *breake* the *bargaine*, they are in danger to be lost for ever.

Yea, but we *know* many of those that are *charged* with such *dangerous* and *damnable Doctrines*, to be very *godly* and *sincere*, right *honest* and *upright* hearted men: and to be *no such* men as the *Apostles Peter* or *Paul* speake of, that are so *Divilish*, as to goe about to *deceive* and *cheate* men of their soules.

k Rom. 3. 12. Πάντες ἐξέκλιναν. They are all gone out of the way.

l Πόθεν τούτῳ ταῦτα. Mark 6. 2.

2 Pet. 2. 3. Πλαστοῖς λόγοις ὑμᾶς ἐμπορεύσονται.

* Witnes their voyages to both the Indies, their Emissaries into England, &c.

m Mat. 23. 15.

Object.

Anſw. 1. To your *Knowledge*, which you ſay you *have* of them, I onely *anſwer* with the words of *Solomon*: *The Counſell of the heart of man is as deep waters*, and he had need bee *a man of underſtanding* that *ſounds* them. For *ſuch* as you ſpeake of are *Rara aves*, not ſo very *Ordinarie* and *Common*. And therefore it followeth; *Moſt men indeed will proclaime each his owne goodneſſe: but a faithfull man who can finde?* It were *ſafer* therefore to ſay, *We have thought them ſuch*, than *We know them ſuch*. For it is *Gods* prerogative *Office* to *ſearch* the *Heart*.

Prov. 20. 5.

verſ. 6.

2. Againe, let's *conſider* what it is, that *diſcovereth* a faithfull, *ſincere* and *truely godly* man, *as* to men; ſurely two things muſt *concurre* to it. 1. A *Profeſſion* of Piety, Faith and Sincerity; 2. And a *Practice* or walking *ſuitable* thereunto. Now, as the *exacteſt* morall *walking* of a *Turke* or *Jew* cannot *juſtifie* his *Religion*; ſo the deepeſt *Profeſſion* of *Faith*, where the *ſcope* and *Way* of *Life* is *contrary*, cannot denominate *a good Chriſtian*. Hee that would be *approved*, muſt be *conformable* to the *Goſpell* rule in *both*. No doubt but *Hymenaus*, *Philetus* and *Alexander*, were very *well thought of* in former times, by *Paul*, *Timothy*, and many others. Yet when once they came to *put away* a good *Conſcience*, they ſoone made *ſhipwracke of* their owne *Faith (learn'd to blaſpheme)* and *denying* the *Reſurrection*, *overthrew the faith of ſome* others too (*n*). And *then*, though *formerly* reputed *Saints*, yet *Paul* made no queſtion to *deliver them* to *Satan*, as the *Maſter* to whom their *works* ſpake them to *belong*.

(*n*) 1 Tim. 1. 19, 20. with 2 Tim. 2. 17, 18.

And therefore let's not ſuffer our ſelves to be *too confident* in our Opinions of *Men*, nor have their *Perſons* too much in *Admiration*: It hath *often* occaſioned much *Detriment* to *Truth*: men of *weak judgements* and of *narrow Obſervation*, being rather apt to *queſtion Truth*, for her *diſtance* from *ſuch men* as they have high thoughts of, than to queſtion the *Men* for their *departing* from *Truth*. You may *thinke* your *Watch* is a *good* one, and goes *right*; yet if you *perceive* it goes not *with* the *Sunne*, bee content to thinke, your *Watch*, not the *Sunne*, goeth *wrong*.

3. But, *Thirdly*, to the *Objection*, It is very like *ſome* of them may be *ſo* indeed, every way *ſuch* as you *deſcribe*. For we have heard

heard *before*, the *perſons* that *Satan* ſeeks moſt of all to *ſeduce*, are *not* Evill men; but for the *moſt part*, ſincere, *honeſt-hearted*, and well-meaning *people*. And the *Apoſtle* gives us to underſtand, That thoſe that lay *Chriſt Jeſus for the Foundation*, may yet raiſe a *dunghilly* heap of *Wood, Hay and Stubble* upon *Him*, in ſtead of a (*o*) *Superſtruction*. And if *Godly* men may be *Deceived*, may they not alſo (being ſo deceived, and *acted*, withall, by *Conſcientious* zealous *Principles*) grow up to be *Deceivers*? There's *Reaſon* they may, *more* than others. For 1. They are not only *acted* by a (p) *Naturall propenſion* and diſpoſition, *as men*, to impart, and *deliver* themſelves of what their *Thoughts* have *travailed* with (*q*). But 2. They are likewiſe under an *Obligation* of *Conſcience*, and Duty as *Chriſtians*, to *Communicate* to others what ever *Truth* they thinke *God* hath *revealed* to their *ſoules*; They *thinke* they *ought* to be helpfull that way; and to *teach* (*r*) others: and *ſo*, if *miſ-informed themſelves*, they muſt *needs* leaven and *miſ-lead others*. For although wee finde it a *difficult* thing, to tranſmit *effectually* to others that which is *Holy* and good *indeed*; (and the *Apoſtles* (before us) ſaw *need* enough to make uſe of *all* their *language*, wit, *parts*, *Intereſts* and *obligations*, as well as their *Graces* and *Authority* to prevaile with people to *receive* and retaine *Truth*:) Yet *Error* and Vanity of *Opinion* is of ſo *ſpreading* and Infectious a *nature*, that where once it is *entred*, and hath got *footing* in a *Church*, like the *Murraine* amongſt Beaſts, or the *Plague* amongſt men, it is very *difficultly* removed and purged out: but *creeps* in *ſecret* from *houſe* to houſe, and from *heart* to heart, under the *Notion* of *Godlineſſe* and *Truth* of the *higheſt* and rareſt *Production*. And hereof Holy *Paul*, (who, if *his lot* had been to live among us in *our times*, might probably have been as much *cried downe* for it, and endangered by it, as he was at *Athens*, *Antioch*, *Corinth*, or elſe-where, for ſetting himſelfe againſt their *corrupt Doctrines* and *Practiſes*) enters a *Caveat* with (*ſ*) *Timothy*, an eminent Evangeliſt, that he *take heed* of them, and of all occaſions of *contention* and *ſtriving* with *them*, (after they have *declared* themſelves, and out-ſtood *Admonitions*.) For, ſaith he, *Their Word will eate as doth a Cancer or Gangren*, which Diſeaſe is known

o 1 Cor. 3. 12.

p *Scire tuum nihil eſt, niſi te ſcire hoc ſciat alter.*

q *Parum eſt optime ſentiendi nonnullis ſpem feciſſe, niſi quis cæteros quàm optimè ad ſuam norit traducere ſententiam.* Cic. l. 2. de leg.

r Heb. 5. 12.

ſ 2 Tim. 2. 17. Tit. 3. 9, 10.

to

to be very *ſpreading* from member to member in the body of him that hath it, till it *eate* out *Life* and *Heart* and *All*.

So that *even godly* perſons being *once leavened* and infected with this ſpirituall Diſeaſe, may *ſooneſt* infect others, and be both (t) πλανῶντες καὶ πλανώμενοι, Deceiving and Deceived; and yet not *thinke ſo* neither. For (u) thoſe very *Apoſtates* from the *Faith*, that give *heed to ſeducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devills*, and *ſpeak lies in hypocriſie*, doe they *thinke* and *know* they doe ſo? *No*, their *Conſcience is* (x) *ſeared*, they have *no ſenſe* of it. And thoſe that *worke* with all *Deceiveableneſſe of unrighteouſneſſe*, do they *imagine* they do ſo? No, their *deluſions* are ſo *ſtrong that they believe a* (y) *lye*. They *deliver* to *others* the *lies* and *errours* which they have (z) *conceived* or *received* (with very ſweet winning words and carriages) *themſelves*, verily *thinking* and *firmly believing* them to be *ſaving Truths*.

t 2 Tim. 3. 13.
u *Errors* of the *underſtanding* and *iudgement*, are not *reported*, nor *reflected on* by *Conſcience*.
x 2 Tim. 4. 2.
y 2 Theſ. 2. 11.
z *Fingunt ſimul creduntque.* Tacit.

And *accordingly*, the Apoſtle doth not ſay *expreſſely*, that theſe *Seducers* alwayes *feigne* theſe words *themſelves*, but *with feigned words they barter* or *make Merchandiſe*, &c. Theſe are the *Coine* that Satan hath *minted*, with a goodly faire *Impreſſion* for this *purpoſe*. But of *Inſtruments*, more, in its proper *place*. That's our *ſecond* Obſervation, that as *He practiſeth upon the godly partie, the Children of Light*; ſo *to deceive them with pretences and Colours of Truth and Light*.

This *might* have been made out further, by an *appeale* to the Experience of the preſent *Times*, were it not *meerely* to *waſte Time* and *Labour*, and to *arraigne* the *Common ſenſe* of the *Reader*; who cannot but take *notice* of the Common *Cry* of *Satans Huckſters* and *Retailers* in every corner, *New light, New light*, be the *Errors* they vend never ſo *palpable*, *ranke*, and *groſſe*, as the *Darkneſſe* of *Egypt* that might be felt. Yea and of all thoſe *ſeverall* and *contrary Opinions*, and Doctrines that *now* abound, (and ſurely the *World* had *never* more *variety*) there is not *One* to bee found (amongſt them *all*) that does *not pretend* it ſelf the *Daughter* of *Truth*, and *Father* it ſelfe upon the *God* of *Truth*. And therefore grant that *Satan* workes *at all* in our dayes, and you muſt *needs agree*, he workes by *Impoſture*, pretence and *Colour* of *Light* and *Truth*.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That He takes advantage *of certaine* Seaſons, *moſt accommodate and* ſuitable *for to* cover, ſtrengthen *and* ſpread *ſuch his De-luſions and Impoſtures.*

A *Third Subtlety* of *Satan*, much to bee *obſerved* and taken notice of, is this, *That* the more eaſily to ſet up his falſe Lights, and put off his Counterfeit Truths, *he ſerves his Turne of ſome certaine Seaſons*, and *Junctures* of Times *which* he knowes to be *moſt for his advantage*, for the *facilitating* and *furthering* of his wicked *work*. We ſhall *Inſtance* in *two*. Times of Reformation, and Times of common Calamity. *Obſer. III.*

1. He alwayes waiteth on *Gods times and Motions*, when he perceives *Him about to cleare up his bleſſed Truth*, (or any *part* thereof) or to *Reforme his Churches*, and *then* doth he take *occaſion*, to *beſtirre* himſelfe in *broaching* and *diſperſing* his Hell-borne *Impoſtures* and *Deluſions*. Satan buſieſt in times of Reformation.

And *this* makes *much* for his *advantage* againſt the *Truth* in *two* reſpects. *Firſt* hereby he *contriveth* and obtaineth the *freer paſſage* for all his *Devices* and Deluſions, amongſt *weake*, *well-meaning*, honeſt-hearted *Chriſtians*; who *deſire* a *Reformation* ſincerely, but are *not able* to *judge* of it ſolidly. And *theſe* (poore *thirſty* ſoules) having prayed for a *ſhowre* of mercies, when they ſee it *comming*, look at *all that falls* as the *dew* of *Heaven*. They underſtand the *Lord* is *paſſing by*, (in the *free courſe* and *glory* of his *Goſpell*) and they deſire to *wait for him*. But *firſt*, there comes a *tearing winde*, rending the *Mountaines* and *Rocks* in pieces: then, thinke ſome, *there He is*, ſure, we heare him; *Hee rides upon the wings of the Winde*; and ſo they *cover their faces* with their *Mantles*, and *looke no further* for him: But the *LORD is not in the Winde*. After the *Winde* comes an *Earthquake*, a great *ſhaking*; *Now* he He *comes*, ſay others, we *feele* him, for the *Earth trembles at his preſence*, and *they* ſeek *no further*: But the *LORD* is *not* in the *Earthquake*. *After* the *Earth-*

That this is much for his Advantage. 1.

1 King. 19, 11. 2 Theſ. 3. 1.

Pſal. 18. 10.

Pſal. 114. 6.

Earthquake comes *a Fire*: *This* is the *LORD*, ſay *another ſort*, we *ſee* Him; for *our God is a conſuming fire*; and they *vaile their faces* too: But the *LORD* is not in the *Fire* neither. At length, when the *Roaring*, *Shaking*, and *Flaſhings* are *over*, there is *a ſtill ſmall voice*: no body *looks* for him *there*, unleſſe it be ſome *Elijah*; But *there* he is, the *Lord is in the Voice*. Weake Saints when they *expect* the approaches of *God*, in any *clearing* up of *Truth*, or *Reformation* of the *Churches*, they are ready to *entertaine every* apparition, (in that *Juncture* of time) as from *God*.

Heb. 12. 29.

The *like* advantage he hath of all *ſuch* as affect *Novelty* rather than *Truth* and *Duty*, & ſo *fall in* with *Reformation* more for the *Change* and *Newneſſe* that appeareth therein, than for any *Excellency*, or *neceſſity* of the *thing* it ſelfe. To theſe the *neweſt faſhion* and *Mode* of *Religion* is *beſt* pleaſing, be it what it ſhall for *uſefulnes* aud fitnes.

2. And *by this* meanes alſo, all juſt *Reformation* is *diſcredited* and ſcandalized, as the very *Mother* and *Nurſe* of *all* that ſpurious and *Monſtrous brood* of *Impious* Principles, *Opinions* and *Practiſes*, repugnant to the *Common Principles* of *Reaſon* and *Religion*; whereby *many*, whoſe Hearts might *otherwiſe cloſe* with a due *Reformation*, are much *prejudiced* and hardned againſt it. *Thus* we ſee, it is much for his *Advantage*.

That this hath been his uſuall practice.

Search all *Scripture Records*, and call in *Hiſtorie* or Experience to *teſtifie* in this cauſe, and it will be *ever* found *true*, That on *Gods Market dayes for Truth*, *the Devill hath conſtantly opened and ſet to ſale his pack of Errours*.

There were *three* great *Criſes* of *Religion* before *Chriſt* came in the fleſh, and *Satan* took *advantage* of them *all*.

1. When the *Law* was given on Mount *Sinai*, and Solemne *Feaſts* with *Religious Rites*, appointed to the *Lord*: Had not *Satan* his *Inſtruments* then in a readineſſe, (impatient *eager Spirits*) who *gave out* that *Moſes* had *loſt himſelfe* in the Mount; That *forty dayes* was too *tedious* a time for the production of any *Religion* which ſhould have *God* for its *Author*; there were thoſe *amongſt them* of *quicker Inſpiration*, that could *ſettle* Religion in a *Moment*, and *teach Aaron* new Divinity, *Theſe be thy Gods*, *O Iſrael*, *&c.*

2. The

2. The *Next* was in *Solomons* time, when the *Place* at length was *Choſen*, of which the *Lord* ſo oft had *ſpoken, that hee would place his Name* there; when the *Tabernacle* was tranſlated into the *Temple*, *Religion* and Divine *Worſhip* improved and *eſtabliſhed*. And did not this ſubtle *Adverſary* forthwith *beſtirre* himſelfe, by all meanes poſſible to *corrupt* and *deprave* it? Did he not *practiſe* and prevaile (even to *wonder*) with *Solomon* himſelfe, the *Beloved of the* (*a*) *Lord*, the Great *Reformer*, and a *Man* every way, both for *Naturall* parts and *Divine enablements*, ſuperlatively *excellent*? That the *ſame* man, who ſome *few* years *before*, was extraordinarily *zealous*, and wiſely *active* for a Glorious *Church ſettlement*, now (*mollified* and wrought downe to it by (*b*) *Inſtruments* fit for ſuch a work) ſhould *Tolerate*, encourage, and (at length) *example* all manner of *Idolatry*; giving manifold *check* to the *Temple* of the *Lord*, (and the *Lord* of that *Temple*) which *himſelfe* had *built*, with ſeverall *High places* erected in *view* (*c*) *thereof*, for *Aſhteroth*, *Milcom*, *Chemoſh*, *Molech*, and the whole *rabble* of Heatheniſh *Abominations*, which *ought not* to have been ſo much as *named* in *Iſrael*. A thing of ſo *ſtrange* a *Nature*, and of ſo *ſad* a *Conſequence*, as cannot but *ſtrike harſhly* upon, (if not alſo *wound* and *pierce*) the very apprehenſion and *underſtandings* of thoſe that ſhall but *ſeriouſly conſider* it.

a 2 Sam. 12, 25. *Jedidiah.*

b His ſtrange Wives. 1 King. 11. 4. 8.

c In the Hill that proſpects Jeruſalem. v. 7.

Oh what a *blacke* and *dark Eclipſe* was this to the *Glory* of the Great *G O D*, and the *ſplendor* of his *Worſhip* and true *Religion*, the *Fame* whereof *now* began to *fill* the *World!* What a *grievous cut* and *Heart-breaking* to all *gracious Spirits*, as many as were *faithfull* in *Iſrael*, (who had *ſolaced* themſelves under all their *burthens* and *preſſures*, with this *Conſideration*, that *'Twas all for Temple-worke* and the *Advancement of Religion*) when as *now* they *ſaw* the *Reformation* broken and *confounded*, with the *bringing in* of all manner of *falſe Worſhip*, (both to *favour* and *faſhion*) and their great *Reformer* (having built his *owne Houſe* with all *Magnificence*) buſily *erecting* Monumentall *Confutations* of all his *former acts* of *Piety*, and *frequenting* the *Altars* and *Solemnities* of the *Idoll gods!*

But as to *Satan*, what can be *imagined* more *pleaſing*, or wherein

he with his *Damned* crew could more *Triumph*, than to *ſee* the *zealous Builder* of *Gods Temple*, become the *Devout Founder* of the *Devills High places?* Him that was the moſt forward *oppoſer* of his Helliſh *Kingdome*, now *cringing* at his *Altars*, and *bowing downe* himſelfe before his *Images*? Him, whom the *Lord* had *ingaged*, by *appearing* to him (*d*) *Twice*, now *renouncing* thoſe Ingagements, deſerting his Service, and *appearing* before his *Idols often*: Yea, what *Diſhonour* or Diſadvantage can be thought ſo great to *God* and his *Truth*, or *Honour* and Reputation to the *Devill* and his Intereſts *imagined greater* than *this*? That *the wiſeſt man in the World* (who was *twice*-immediately *ſollicited* by *God* himſelfe, and who had *Dedicated* his *younger years* to his Service) ſhould *now* in his *Elder times*, (when his *Wiſedome* was *ſuppoſed* to be moſt *Improved*, his *Judgement* ſetled, and his *Devotion* moſt ſeriouſly *fixed* and *grounded*, upon diligent *Obſervation*, mature *Conſideration*, and long *Experence*) turne *Renegado* from *God*, *tranſlating* the *Light* of his Countenance, and all the *Aſpects* of his Divine *Favour* upon the Immediate *Repreſentatives* of the *Devill* himſelfe, whilſt hee *Crowned* his *Altars* with all the *Reputation* he had for *Piety*, *Wiſedome* and *Experience*.

(d) 1 King. 11. 9.

And *yet*, as if all *this* were to *little* purpoſe, ſo long as *Iſrael* ſtill *followed* the *Lord*, we ſhall finde that *ſoon after*, (As ſoone as ever *Solomon*, his very *ill-inſtrument* was *dead*) He *deviſeth*, and by the hand of *Jeroboam* bringeth in, and *ſetteth up* a *New Religion* for the Generality of the *People*: A *new forme* of *Worſhip*, in *other Places*, (*Dan* and *Bethel*) and in the hand of *other Perſons*, (*whoſoever would he conſecrated him*) with a *new Feaſt*, (a *mock* Paſſeover) and *liberty* of *Conſcience* for *All* Religions *except* the True.

1 King. 12. 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33.

Yet *All this*, (wee muſt needs ſay) was upon very *faire* and plauſible *pretences*: There was *Reaſon of State* enough for it, and *Neceſſity* in point of Carnall *Policie*; Yea, and *liberty of Conſcience* might be pleaded for it too. For if *David* or *Solomon* make bold to *change* the *Tabernacle* into a *Temple*, why may not *Jeroboam*, (called not *meerely* by *Providence*, but by *Propheſie* alſo to the *Kingdome*, and *proſpered* marvellouſly by *God* in his Procee-

Proceedings) why may not *he*, I ſay, uſe his *liberty of Conſcience*, and *change* the late erected *Temple* into *High Places*? The example of *Solomon* no doubt being ſufficiently improved, as a *Preſident* for this purpoſe.

And might not alſo the *Liberty of the People*, and the *free-born Iſraelites*, be ſeaſonably and diſcreetly *urged* in this caſe? who, by this *New Religion*, ſhould be *eaſed* of that *Intollerable burden of Tithes*, firſt *Fruits*, and the like *Contributions* formerly payed to the *Levites* and the *Temple* at *Jeruſalem*; as alſo of the great *charge* and *paines* of *Travailing* ſo often every yeare to *Jeruſalem* to Worſhip, &c. And who is *he*, that is but *Reaſonable* in his *Religion*, upon whom ſuch *weighty* reaſons, and good *Conſiderations* thereunto *moving*, would not greatly *take* place and *prevaile*? The *weight* of which *Arguments* with *many* People, *There be* in our Times, that *underſtand* very well. And therefore yee ſhall *obſerve*, if you pleaſe, that in every *Petition* for *Univerſall toleration*, and *liberty* of *All* Religions, they *inſiſt* moſt upon *Free-Quarter*, *Exciſe* and *Tithes*, &c. and ſeeme to make their *maine blow* at *theſe*, ſtriking at *Univerſall toleration*, ſometimes onely in cloſe Language by the *by*. And there bee two or three *Reaſons* for *ſo* doing. *Firſt*, by this meanes they think to furniſh themſelves with an *Inſtrument*, to *ſtop* the *Mouths* of Gods *Miniſters*, that ſhall *Declare* againſt ſuch *Petitions* for *Toleration*. *Oh, you ſpeake for your owne Intereſt, you are afraid to forgoe your Tithes*. Againe, by *jumbling* theſe things *together*, they would have it *thought*, that Exciſe, Free-Quarter, &c. and Tithes are *all alike preſſures* and burdens; and would *ingage* people to get them *all* removed together; When as, alas, the *Prime contrivers* are oftentimes *no loſers* (to be *ſure*) by *Free-Quarter* and *Exciſe*; and it may be never had occaſion to pay *Tithes* neither, onely they eſteem it their great *grievance* that *Miniſters live*. But *laſtly*, the *chiefe* end of crowding theſe together into ſuch Petitions is, that they may *prevaile* for the more *Subſcriptions*, amongſt the *baſer* ignorant and (e) *prophaner* ſort, who, to bee *ſure* to ſave a little *money*, might eaſily bee *perſwaded* to ſigne a *Petition* that ſhould Pray the *Eſtabliſhment*, as well as *Toleration* of *Popery*, *Judaiſme*, or *Turciſme*, if but put into *hand-*

(e) That this courſe was taken to get hands to ſuch a Petition in *Leiceſter-ſhire* not long ſince; there bee men worthy beliefe doe affirme.

some termes, and language that shall not too much *stumble* them.

3. But to *returne* from whence we are a little *digressed*. The *Third* great *Crisis* of *Religion*, (before *Christ*) was at the *Returne* of the Babylonish *Captivity*, and that eminent *Restauration* thereof by *Zorobabel*, *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*. And here, good God! in how *many* severall *shapes* did *Satan appeare* to hinder and *discourage* them? *sometimes* (by his Instruments) (*f*) *scorning* and *despising* them; sometimes *incensing* and *ingaging* the superiour *Powers against* (*g*) *them*: sometimes *questioning* the particular *men* that were *forward* in the (*h*) *Worke*. Sometimes endeavouring by *treacherous Plots* to *destroy* (*i*) them. And when *none* of *these* could *prevaile*, he hath yet *two* or *three* more dangerous *Devices* in *reserve* than all the former. And what may *they* be? Why *First*, get in, to *build with them*; offer to *help them*. That were *good* indeed: (*Gods worke* is like to bee *well helped* forward when the *Devill* shall be one of his *Day-labourers!*) *This* will *not* doe; but *another* peradventure *may*. What's that? They are *Conscientious* People; try to *ensnare* and *lead* them by their own *Conscience*. That's a *shrewd* one indeed: Its *Conscience* that *spurres* them forward to the *Work*; and if *Conscience* might be so farre *scrupled* or *corrupted*, as to make them *breake downe* what they have *built*, or *knocke off* now *Temple-worke* is in such a *forwardnesse*, it would be a *notable* exploit. But *how* shall *Conscience* be *wrought* to that? There be two or three *Prophets* (*k*) amongst them, that *Preach* to them in the *Name* of the *Lord*, and they *hearken* to them in *every thing*: *call in*, or raise up *some others*, that may speak to them in the *same Authority*, and let them carry it *Prophet-like*, as if they were *indeed inspired* and *sent* of *God*. These may *discourage* or *divide* them, at least *perswade* them to some *Absurd* carriages, not a little to the *Prejudice* of these great *Reformers*. But say that should not take *neither*; There is *another* then *shall*, (The old Refuge when *All* failes) set up *another Religion*, a *Counter-temple* at *Samaria*, priviledged with *Liberty sufficient* to *draw* over good store of *Proselytes*. This (if any *credit* may be given to (*l*) *History*) was done,

f Neh. 2. 19.
g Ezra 4.
h Ezra 5. 10.
i Neh. 6. 2.
k *Zechariah, Haggai, &c.*
Neh. 6. 12.
l Fl. Josep. Antiq. l. 11 c. 8. Cunæus de Rep. Hebr. l. 1. c. 16. *Templum ædificare in Garizin monte Samariæ altissimo destinavit, ejusq; rei potestatem mox ab Alexandro per Sanballetem accepit. Ita -- in Adulterino Templo saltem quo poterat pacto Pontifex fuit.* Vide & Opmeri *Opus Chron. sub* An. M. 3628, 3638, &c.

done, by a *fit Inſtrument* for ſuch a purpoſe, a *diſcontented* man, *Manaſſe*, grandchild to *Eliaſhib* the high *Prieſt*, and Son in law to *Sanballat* (whom *Nehemiah* therefore *baniſhed* from *Jeruſalem*, *Neh.* 13 28.) who, it ſeems, formed the *Mongrell* Samaritan *Religion* into a ſet way, and *eſtabliſhed* that *Sect*, ſo odious to the *Jewes*; whereof *Mention* is made, *Joh.* 4. 20 22. and in ſundry *other* places.

The *next*, and *moſt remarkable* time of all for the *breaking forth* of *Light* and clearing up of *Truth* in the world was, when *He* came into the *World*, who is the onely *Light* of the *World*, and the *Truth it ſelfe*, the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*. And what variety of *Sects* and Opinions *Satan* had *then* in a readineſſe, and about *that* very *time* diſſeminated and *ſcattered*, to *amuſe* and *divert* the mindes of men *from* the *Truth*, and *enſnare* them with *Errour*, there is none that read and *obſerve* the Holy *Scriptures* of the *New* Teſtament, but underſtand and muſt *acknowledge*, There were *Phariſees*, *Sadduces*, *Herodians*, *Gaulonites*, *Theudiſts*, *&c.* (then and about that time) *falſe Chriſts*, falſe *Goſpelr*, falſe *Apoſtles*, (*transforming* themſelves into the *Apoſtles of Chriſt*) falſe *Brethren*, falſe *Teachers*, *deceitfull Workers*, pretending extraordinary *Revelation* and *Spirit* (*above* and *againſt* the *Apoſtles* of Chriſt) but bringing in *Damnable Hereſies*, which the true *Apoſtles* earneſtly *withſtood*, and (*l*) *directed* other *Chriſtians* to doe the *like*.

Gal. 1. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 11. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 2.

l 2 Theſ. 2. 1, 2, 3.

What an over-flowing *Deluge* likewiſe of *Errours* and *Hereſies* this *old Serpent caſt out of his mouth*, thereby to *ſwallow* up the (*m*) *Church* and *Truth* it ſelf, when as (through the mighty Power of *God*) it brake forth from under that *black Cloud* of *Romiſh Darkneſſe* in the dayes of *Luther*, (that *third Elias*, as one calls him) and to what a *monſtrous* height they ſwell'd *before* they were *dried up* or abated, the whole *Chriſtian* world, that in ſome parts of *Sweden*, and *Germany* eſpecially, have ſad *cauſe* to *Remember*. For (beſides the great *effuſion* of *blood* which they (*like* (*n*) *ſo many mad Dogs* made in *thoſe* parts, and the many Places, and *Noble Families* they *ſacked* and deſtroyed in that their *rage*) the *Levelling principles* upon which they grounded all their *wilde* and mad *proceedings*, gave a *greater*

m Rev. 12. The woman and her manchilde.

n *Reſiſtentes quos cunque rabidorum inſtar canum, laniant.* Cluver. Hiſt.

blow

blow to the *Gospell, than all the oppositions and persecutions from the Pope and Emperour, and their most active and powerfull Instruments (o).*

Nor hath this *Grand Impostor* forgotten to play the *same game*, with like *dexterity* (and we *hope* yet with *never* a whit better *successe*) in these *Times* that are *now* upon us: We may easily perceive the *footsteps* of *Satan* are the *same*, onely hee treads *now* on other *ground*. It is not long since hee *mightily* endeavoured to *Corrupt* and defile these *British Churches* (by Instruments of a *Temper* for his *turne*) with the spurious mixtures of *Romish Superstition*. But in *that* Designe hee was *disappointed*: for the *Righteous Lord* (whose *Wisedome* is farre *above* all Hellish *Devices*) snapt asunder the Cords of those violent *Plowers*, and *Evill Husband-men*, who *plowed upon the back of the Church, and made long their (p) Furrowes*. Through his *Mercy, beyond* all *hopes*, that *snare was broken*, and a *Reformation* hopefully begun by the *Parliament*, which many a poore *godly soule* had long *prayed* and *waited* for, and therefore were now *over-joyed* to see, *not questioning* (alas!) the vigorous *advance* thereof, (maugre the *malice* of *Hell* it selfe) to a speedy *clearing* of the *Churches* of *Innovations* and *Corruptions*, and *setling* the Kingdomes in *Truth* and *Peace*. For surely many pernicious Doctrines were then *examined* and *censured*, many *burthens* removed, *snares* cut a pieces, and grosse *abuses* redressed: some *Truths* also *vindicated* and eminently *cleared* up (such as the *Lord* had *allotted* for *that season*) to their *native* brightnesse, and singular *Glory*.

And this worke of *Reformation* was *that* indeed, which *stirred* and *raised* up to the *Parliament*, the greatest number both of their *friends* and *enemies*: as *without* which, neither *so many* of the *Godly* had ingaged *for* them, nor of the *Prophaner* sort *against* them. It was *this* that filled all *gracious* and unprejudiced Hearts with over-flowing *Joy*, not onely in *these Kingdomes*, (where they *adventured All* upon this great undertaking, *pawning* their uttermost *Intereſts* upon the *Wisedome* and *faithfulnes* of that *Individuall Parliament*) but also in the *Neighbour Churches* and Nations round about us, who *reckoned* all their *deerest hopes* adventured and bound up in *Ours*. And it was (no doubt)

Sa

o *Non deerant Persecutores ſævi & Potentes---terrimam vero notam Prædicationi Evangelii inuſſit Ruſticorum rabies, qui ejus prætextu omnia libera eſſe contendebant, æque Luthero & Pontificiis infeſti.* Cluv. *Hiſt. ſub* Car. 5. *Imp.*

p 1 Cor. 3. 9. Iſal. 129 3, 4.

as *grievous* to the *Prince* of *Darknes*, to ſee his *ſhadowes flying* before the ſwift approaches of *Light* and *Truth*: and to behold the *Church* of *God* a *building*, whilſt his owne *Synagog* was *falling*: Who therefore ſets his *Shoulder* to the *Worke*, with *all* his *Power* and *Policie*, to ſupport his owne *Intereſt*, and deſtroy the *Churches*.

To compaſſe *this*, he drives on *two* great *Deſignes* at once; that ſo if *one* ſhould *faile*, (as indeed it *did*) he might yet *attaine* his *End* by the *other*. Theſe were 1. To *oppoſe* the worke of *Reformation* with *open force*. 2. To *obſtruct* and *undermine* it with *ſecret* ſubtlety. Should *that* prevaile, it would goe *hard* with the *faithfull*; but ſhould *this* take place, it would give a great *wound* to the very *Chriſtian Faith*. The *former* therefore was very *dangerous*, but the later, *deadly*.

And *both* theſe were *menaged*, with *ſubordinacy* or *reference* each to other, as he ſaw the *nature* and juncture of *times*, *perſons* and *affaires* required. For *that* of *Force* its cleare it was both *commenced* and *carried on* with *much* ſubtlety, as in many reſpects, ſo *this* for *one*: That the *Noble* and moſt *able Patrons* of *Religion*, and Maſter Builders in the worke of *Reformation*, (being *forwardeſt* in *Armes* to *remove* the *Obſtructions* of their worke) might by the fortune of *war* be *waſted*, or by ſome *emergent infelicity* therein, *ſlighted* and *diſauthoriſed*: and the *Counſels* of the *reſt*, by Reaſon of their *abſence* or diſ-ingagement, greatly *weakned*, prejudiced and *impaired*.

But, *not proſpering* at all in his *Lions skinne*, he *betakes* himſelf wholly to the *Foxes*: and being altogether *broken* in his Deſigne of *Force*, (by the great hand of the Lord of Hoaſts,) he ſeemes to be wholly *fixed* upon that of *Subtlety* and *Stratagem*.

To thrive in *this*, from the very *firſt*, he *ſnatched* at the *Advantage* of our *time* of *Reformation*, and building *Seaſon*. He knew the *ſtreames* that had been *long ſtopt*, were not onely *muddy* and *troubled*, but might *eaſily* (at their firſt *recourſe*) be *guided beſide* their proper *Chanells*. And that active *Spirits* under forcible *detentions*, when once they finde *enlargement*, *tranſport* themſelves with *violent motions* and proruptions. *Satan* well knew how to fiſh our *troubled* Waters; and being not ſo narrowly *watched*,

whilst our *Furnace* was *working*, and *Wine-presse* running, hee quickly mixed and *imbased* our *Silver* with *Drosse*, and our *Wine* with *Water*.

Stulti dum vitant vitia, in contraria currant.

It is a *folly* very *incident* to our frail *Natures*, in *declining* one *extreme* to runne into *another*; which yet is *not done* without cutting the *Æquator* and golden line of *Mediocrity*. That wee were very *farre gone*, before these Times, in our *Southerly Declination* (towards *Rome*) all *sober* Protestants must needs *acknowledge*: And that we have *now* declined, to as wide a *latitude* on the *other extreme*, whilst *every one* would fixe *Religion* upon the *Zenith* of his *owne Horizon*, and frame it to a *Conjunction* with his owne *Fancy* or *Interest*, none of *common* sense and *unbribed* Judgement can *deny*. There is a *Path* indeed, which *wee* have *crossed* (as *wanderers* sometimes doe *their way*) which had we *known* and *kept*, we might (probably) have been an *happy* people *. But our *Provocations* were *too great* to give way to such a *Mercy*: And there wanted not a *concurrence* of many *other* causes to *prevent* it. For, (besides *Englands sinnes*, the *Root* of *all* our *Miseries*) God by his righteous *Judgement*, the *Devill* and *wicked* men by their *Malice* and *subtlety*, *Weake* men by their *frowardnesse* rashnesse and *Presumptions*, yea *Wise* and *good men* by their *inadvertencies*, easinesse and *Partialities*, had (All) a manifest and *reall Influence* upon the succeeding *miseries* both of *Church* and *State*.

* *Quod quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis cautum est in horas. Et sera vox hæc nimis. O mihi præteritos, &c.*

In *short*, (that we may *dismisse* the Particular) *Satan* for certaine was not wanting, in our *first Motions* towards a *Reformation*, to *disguise* our true *Interest* from our *knowledge*, whilst we were yet in a *capacity* to *improve* and *follow* it. But had his *Instruments* of all sorts, as hath been hinted, (and *sometimes* the *best* of *men* are his very *bad* (*o*) *instruments*) to carry on his Designes *against* the *Church* and *Truth* of God amongst us. And *first*, seeing *us* at a *losse*, (for we were much *to seek* at *such work*) He would needs *help* us, and by all meanes *build with us*. And we need not feare to say, that the *Method* of *pulling downe all* the old, before *any part* of a new frame was *ready* to be *set up*, was *Counsell* of *his* suggesting (by what Instrument soever) and a *Plot* of *his contriving*. Wherein having once *prevailed*, he had

• Matt 16. 23.

then

then the *pretence* of much *Caution* and *Deliberation*, to *colour* all *Obſtructions* of *ſettlement*, as alſo to *prepare* and bring in *all manner* of ſtrange *Materialls*, towards the *New building*. *Then* began he *firſt* to furniſh-out ſome *ſtrange* & *New Opinions* amongſt us, the *faireſt* indeed and moſt plauſible at *firſt*, and the *reſt* afterwards *by degrees*, as *way* was made for them.

Id certè moris eſt apud Hæreticos ut obnumbrent ſeipſos & occultent in Principiis, quouſque majorem fiduciam capiant, & quodam favore multitudinis inveniur, tum enim contagioſa venena intrepide effundunt. Chryſ. in Mat. Hom. 47.

For we muſt know there are certaine *Prolegomena*, preparatives and *Introductions* (as it were) to all *Hereſies*: certaine *Poſtulata* which are more *generall*, and under which they *ſhelter* and *conceale* themſelves for a *ſeaſon*, which (at firſt ſight) ſeem to *proſpect Truth* and nothing elſe, but have alwayes a *Poſterne* into the *wilderneſſe* of *Errour*.

By this meanes the *Builders* were in a ſhort time ſo *unſetled*, *divided* and *confounded*, that thoſe who not long before *might* and *did not*, now, if they *would*, they *could not* goe on with the *worke*; which at *this day* ſtands in ſo miſerable a *poſture*, that it preſents little more to *view*, than an *over-grown Foundation*, carefully *buried* in a *monſtrous* heap, of Materialls pretended for a *Superſtruction*. And whether *this* be a piece of *Worke* according to the *minde* and will of *God*, if neither *Word* nor *Conſcience* can as yet informe us; yet *time will*. For the *Day* ſhall *declare*, and *Fire* try all *Church-worke*: and if it *abide*, its *well* for the workmen; *Diſſenters* muſt take the *ſhame* of their *non-compliance*. But if *not* (*would* to *God* it were well *conſidered*) it will goe very *hard* with the *builders*, they ſhall ſee their *worke burnt* before them; and if themſelves eſcape, it will be *Tanquam ex incendio*, very *difficultly*, and with a great deale of *Dammage*.

1 Cor. 3. 12, 13, 15. Be it the *Day-light* and *Fire* of the *Word* & *Spirit*, or the darke *Day* and *fire* of *Judgement* (for to that worke he comes in *Fire*) and *this*, either the *laſt* and generall *Day*, or *our particular day*, (for we muſt look for *ours* as the *Jewes* had *theirs*) the worke even of *this* Reformation ſhall be *tried*, be ſure.

But, for the *Reformation*, ſo much *deſired* and *ſought* after of *good men*, *feared* of *Papiſts*, and thoſe of *corrupteſt* principles and wayes, and wonderfully *looked* at of *all* (both *friends* and *enemies* at home and *abroad*) it *ſeemeth* now like enough to be *laboured*,

wrought downe and *directed*, to an *Issue* much like that of the *Councell of Trent*, viz. *Most* for their *advantage* who *most feared* it, and endeavoured to prevent it, and for the great *prejudice* of *those* that *sought* it, and layed out themselves to the *utmost* to *obtaine* it.

Thus we see how *Satan* hath served his turne of *Reformation-seasons*: There is another *Season* which he also greatly *improves*, whereof we shall speak in the next Chapter.

CHAP. V.

How Satan *and his* Instruments *(Jesuites and others) take advantage of* troublesome-times, *to corrupt Religion, and make great* Changes *therein: (In pursuance of our Third Observation.)*

ANother Season, whereof *Advantage* is usually taken, by *Satan* and his Instruments, to make great *Innovations* and *Changes* in *Religion*, is the *Troublesomnesse* and generall *Calamity* of *Times*. *Subtle* and *Politique* men, in all Ages, that would *mould* and shape the *Religion* of the People, to *accommodate* the particular *Interest* which they have carryed on, have *ever* wayted on such *opportunities*; as might be *exampled* amongst the very Heathens: and is *observed* by some from their writings (a) *Plague, Famine, Warre, or any other generall and lasting Calamity, for the most part affords faire Colours and occasions to bring in many new Religions: and therefore then the Magistrate is concerned to be very carefull, lest true Religion bee corrupted.* Now the *Reasons* and grounds of this Advantage are *Divers*.

(a) *Pestis, aut fames, aut bellum, aut quævis alia & diuturna calamitas, ut plurimum prætextus affert, ut multiplex Religio & externa tunc invadat Remp. & convelleat. Itaq; tunc temporis, &c.* Alst. Fl. Polit. Ex Liv. Dec. 1. l. 4. L. Serg. & Qu. Servilio. Coss.

1. *First*, for that *some* of the said *Miseries* and Calamities *seem* to *require* the assistance and *employment* of *all* that may be *serviceable*, without regard to their *Religion*, bee that *what it shall*.

As for the managing of *Warre*, common Policy lookes not so much for men of *soundest judgements*, but those of *greatest abilities*

ties and experience for that ſervice. Although indeed *true policy* requires a *concurrence* of *Principles* and (*b*) *Intereſts*, in thoſe they admit to place of *Truſt*, whether *Military* or *Civill*; (a point which *ſome* in theſe times are *not* to learne, though *other ſome* not long ſince *were*.) And the *Word* of *God* clearely *diſadviſeth* ſuch a generall *latitude*, in the caſe of (*c*) *Amaziah*, who had hired *One hundred thouſand* mighty men of Valour out of *Iſrael*, as *Auxiliaries* in his warre againſt *Edom*: But becauſe they were *Apoſtates* from the *true Religion*, and had deſerted the Ordinances of *God*, they were, at the *command* of God *caſhiered*; though every way to ſeeming *loſſe* and *diſadvantage*. For, *Firſt*, hereby *Amaziah's* ſtrength and *number* of *men* was greatly *diminiſhed*. 2. Alſo a *Vaſt Army* was *diſcontented* and enraged, *within* the Bowels of his (*d*) *Kingdome*. 3. Upon *this occaſion* he had a great part of his *Countrey harraſſed*, divers *Cities* ſurprized and *plundred*, and ſome *thouſands* of his *Subjects* (*e*) *ſlain*. And 4. by this action he could not but *diſoblige* & provoke a *potent Neighbor*-kingdom, &c. And *yet* who ſhal ſay but that it had been much *worſe* for *Amaziah* if he had *employed* (*f*) them? *But if thou wilt doe it, be ſtrong for the battell: but God ſhall make thee to fall before the Enemy.*

b 1 Sam. 29. 3, 4, 5.

c 2 Chron. 25. 6, 7, 8.

d V. 10.

e V. 13.

f 2 Chr. 25. 8.

So that the *goodneſſe* or *Unprofitableneſſe* of *Counſels*, Inſtruments and *Undertakings*, is *not* diſcovered and *determined*, by their *ſerving* or *not* ſerving the *preſent turne*; but by their (*g*) *Iſſues*, and *Influence* upon the *Future*. If, being *aſſaulted* upon the *Road*, a ſtranger come in and *reſcue* me from the *Robber*, I may juſtly aſcribe my poſſeſſion of *life* and *goods* (under God) to his *Humanity* and *Valour*: But *yet*, if after he *knowes* my Condition, *himſelfe* fet upon me at a greater *Advantage*, knock me *downe*, binde and *rifle* me, I have *no* great *cauſe* to boaſt of his former *Courteſie*. *Phyſick* is better commended in the *Stoole* than in the *Glaſſe*: And the Advice is not amiſſe, *Praiſe a faire Day at night*.

g *Exitus acta.*

Qui prodeſſe poteſt, & idem nocere.

Quid ſerus veſper vehat incertum.

But, whatever is the *Duty*, this (to be ſure) is the *Practice* of the World, to *value* all *things* as they are thought to *conduce*, or be materiall to the *Ends* they have in *view*, and the *Intereſt* they follow. *Whereby* it comes to paſſe, that *many* men ſtrangely

principled (as to *Religion*) are *employed* in Service, which preſents them *Opportunities* of applying thoſe *ſubtle* and *ſearching* Principles, (to thoſe they can perſwade to become their *Patients*) which *mollifie*, *relaxe* and *diſſolve* all obligations of *Conſcience* towards *God* and *Man*: the *Iſſue* whereof is more *Dangerous* than can bee readily imagined or expreſſed.

And will not *this*, upon due *ſearch*, be found to be the *Intereſt*, which the *Jeſuiticall* Romiſh *Party* vigorouſly and very carefully *carry on* at this Day, in order to the Propagation of *Popery* in *England?* They *know* well enough, that *Proteſtants* and *Papiſts* ſtand *extreamly* oppoſed, as to their *differences* in *Religion*. And *as* they have *no minde* to come *off* to *us*, ſo neither have they *hopes* of *our* immediate *comming on* to (*h*) *them*. Therefore *before* theſe times, they endeavoured (*pretended* at leaſt) a *Medium participationis*, that *Rome* and we might *meet* halfe way. And doe they not *now* labour in *earneſt* for a *Medium abnegationis*, to worke us to an equall *Indifferency* to *all* Religions, as well *our owne* as *theirs*? If they can but ingage *Authority*, and throughly diſpoſe the *Military Power*, to ſuch an *Indifferency* (to all Religions) they may with much more *Advantage* carry on their *Deſigne* with all *other* ſorts of perſons, by their *inferiour* Inſtruments, which they uſe (in every corner) to *doe* their *worke* and yet perhaps *not know* it. And look *how farre* they have *prevailed* in this, *ſo farre* they have cleared the *Tables* for a *reception* of *their* Religion or any *other*: And *this* is no ſmall *preparative* to a buſines, when *that which hindred* is *removed*. The *old building* muſt be pull'd *downe* before a *New* frame (though never ſo ready) can be *ſet up* in the *place*: and the *work* is in a good *forwardneſſe* when the *ground* is once *cleared*.

h *Ab extremo ad extremum non pervenitur niſi per medium.*

Their *next* Part is, to *keep* it ſo a *while*, and *prevent* the *eſtabliſhment* of *any* Religion, *till* they can *ripen* their Deſigne, to *bid boldly* for *their owne*. This, perhaps, will *not* be *done* on the *ſuddaine*; and therefore, having *miſcarried* in ſo many *former* plots, it will not be the leaſt of their *care* to ſtudy handſomly to *colour* and *cover* this. For they *teeme* and travaile with an *Elephantine* birth, which requires much *time*, with many able *heads* and *hands* to *Midwife* it into the World. And with *theſe* they

are very well *furniſhed*; men that are for *every* (*i*) *turn*, dextrous and *ready*, as if they were *borne* to that *onely* which they *undertake* and *go about*. The *Jeſuits* I mean, whoſe *Principles*, *Number*, way of *breeding*, *Relations*, *Opportunities*, *correſpondencies*, and *manner* of *Employment*, are *conſiderable* of *all* Kingdomes and *States*, and very *formidable* with *ſome*.

i *Univerſatilis ingenii* l. iv. de Cat. Uticenſ.

That ſaying of *Claudius* (*k*) *Aquaviva*, their late *Præpoſitus generalis*, (or chiefe Maſter of the *Jeſuits*) deſerves to be *Remarked*; *viz.* That *he* could *raiſe* an *Army* for *need*, greater and *ſooner* than any *Prince* in *Chriſtendome*. This may bee *thought*, of *ſome*, but the vaine-glorious *humour* of the *man*: but there is ground *enough* to *receive* it as a ſhort (but true) *account* of that *Order*. For it is *true* enough, that when the *Pope* was at a *pinch*, and the *Papacy* it ſelf *endangered*, the ſame Man undertook to furniſh him with *forty thouſand Souldiers* out of his owne *Order* of *Jeſuits*; provided, that *as many* of them as ſhould be *ſlaine* in the Warres, might be *regiſtred Martyrs*. Nor are they of *condition* to be *ſlighted* as to *ſuch Service*, ſeeing they are *trained* up with as much *hardſhip*, and *ſtricter Diſcipline*, than any Militia (without exception) in *Europe*: And have made the World to know, by ſeverall *Experiments*, that ſome *one* (*l*) of them, with a *bold hand*, is able to give a ſuddain *turne* to the *Intereſts* and *affaires* of whole *Kingdomes*, if not *alſo* of the whole *Chriſtian* world.

k *J. Everardi Britanno-Rom. de Jeſuitar. Exercitio ſpirituali, &c.*

Tempore interdictionis Venet.

l As *Ravillac* by his Murder of *H.* 4. King of *France*, &c.

And *ſurely*, if *they* can but ſpare and *furniſh* them *out*, there hath been of *late* as good *ſhelter* and *entertainment* for them in *England* as they can or doe deſire: *For* they need no longer, *now*, goe the *old* dull *way* of *ſhifting* up and downe from one *Catholiques Houſe* to another, at their *Churches charge*, (and to lie *couchant* where ever they become, in feare and *danger* to bee *diſcovered* and Metamorphoſed to *Martyrs*) if ſo be they can *contrive*, to be *employed*, maintain'd and *paid* by the *State*. And *what* ſhould *hinder* this, if they can but *mount* & *arme* themſelves, and get *liſted*? There is no *Shibboleth** (ſure) of *Covenant*, *Oath* or Church-*worſhip*, wherby they need be *diſtinguiſhed* or (*m*) *diſ-*

* Judg. 12. 6.

m A *Jew*, *Jeſuit*, *Mahometan*, or a man of any other Profeſſion may conceale himſelfe under the Notion of a *Seeker*, one above Ordinances, &c.

covered.

covered. And for the *Engliſh-tongue*, (who is it but knowes) *that* can bee *no marke* of Difference, ſince many *Engliſhmen* are of *that Order*, and *moſt* of that *Order* are good *Linguiſts*.

And being in that *capacity* what may they not *doe*, ſo far as Divine *Providence* ſhall *permit*? The moſt *powerfull* and certaine *Operations* in *Nature* are *not diſcernible* but in their *effects*: (as the *Influences* of the *Heavens*, operations of *Angels*, naturall *Spirits*, and the like.) And truely by the *Print* and *ſtep*, we may partly *perceive* what *Foot* hath lately *trodden* upon the *Councels* and *Proceedings* in the three *Kingdomes*; thoſe of *England* and *Ireland* eſpecially. We proceed *not* to *particulars*, but may ſafely *hint* as much as the publick *Acts* of *State* have *complained* of. And what *further* Influences theſe *Jeſuiticall* Spirits, and all their *Agents*, (*Scientes & Ignorantes*) may (by Gods *permiſſion*, for our fearefull *ſinnes*) have upon our *Affaires* of *Church* and *State* for the future, *themſelves* under *God* are *beſt* able to make *Diſcoverie*. But ſurely, their *Inſtructions* are ſo *prepared* and *punctuall*, their ſeverall *parts* ſo *choſen*, laid out, and *fitted* to their reſpective *Natures*, abilities, and *opportunities*; Their *endeavours* and *Counſel* ſo unanimous and *compacted*; their *Deſires* ſo *zealous*, and their *hopes* ſo *pregnant* and full of *Encouragement*, that *during* this univerſall *latitude* and *Indulgence* (the enſuing *Miſchiefes* whereof are like to bee the maine *Arguments* that will bee *received* againſt it) it is very *probable* they may *cut* their *way* to their Remoteſt ends, through the very *Heart* and *Bowels* of *Church* and *Common-Wealth*.

Thus our *Calamities* admit of *them* (and others *like* them) to *employment*, and their *Employment* to *Opportunities*, of *agitating* and *acting*, what ever Counſell *decreeth* to be *requiſite*, to carry on the *Romiſh Intereſt* amongſt us. *Romiſh* I ſay, for it is but an *Inſtrumentall* and *particular Intereſt*; whereas the maine deſigne of *Satan* is much *larger* and more *Catholique*: For *they* (poore Creatures) *dig* and *delve*, and cut their trenches ſo, as to draw *Error* at length (if poſſible) into *one Channell*; Whereas the *Devill* not contented with *that*, ſtrongly *intends* the *perpetuall*

petuall toleration and Authorifing of *All Theirs*, though large, yet lyeth within ſome Circle: but His exceedeth all lines of circumſcription. For Errour unlimited is infinite.

2. A *ſecond* Reaſon of the Advantage that *Satan* and his Agents have by *Calamitous* times may be *this*: Becauſe the *Miſeries*, troubles and *cares* of this life (which in ſuch times *abound*) doe ſtrongly *divert* and put *by* the thoughts of men from *obſerving* and *oppoſing* ſuch *erroneous* Doctrines and *Innovations*; Eſpecially in their *firſt* entrance and *beginning*, before they have gather'd *ſtrength* to *force* their owne way (as if they be *let alone* they *doe*) through *all* renitency and *oppoſition*.

Our *Saviour* ranking the *Cares of this life* with *ſurfetting and* (n) *Drunkenneſſe*, ſignifieth unto us a *ſimilitude* and likenes, if not an *equality* of their ill *Influences*, upon the heart of a *Chriſtian* ſurcharged therewith. Namely, to *diſtract* and *diſguiſe* him from himſelfe, and make him *inſenſible* of the *practiſes*, *ſurpriſalls*, and *aſſaults* of *Satan*. *They have ſtricken me, and I was not ſicke, they have beaten mee, and I felt it not*, Prov. 23. 35. (We have therefore need of a *Sentinell* conſtantly at our *doore*, to give *ſtop* to ſuch unfriendly (o) *Intruders*, even under *ordinary* Diſpenſations: but we ſhould have a ſtrong *Guard*, to do well, in *tumultuous* times and *extraordinarie*.)

n Luk. 21. 34.

o Diſtracting cares.

The *Voice* from *Heaven* indeed cryes, *Firſt ſeek the Kingdome of God and the Righteouſneſſe thereof*. Let all *other* Intereſts vaile and give place to that of *Religion* wherein *God* and the *ſoule* are *partners*. But then *Satan* murmur's to our corrupt *Natures* from below, *Skin for skin, and all that ever a man hath will he give for his life*; And when *Life* and *Livelihood* are *endangered*, all *other* Intereſts (with the *moſt*) are wont to ſtand *neglected*. When *Eſau* is ready to *faint* for hunger, he had rather *eate* than *Diſpute*, and will *quit* his *Birth-Privilege* for a Meſſe of *pottage*.

Vox Chriſti. *Primum quærite regnum Dei.*

Vox Satanæ. *Vitæ tuta omnibus anteponenda.*

The *Romans* loved their *Liberties well*, and *ſtrugled* as long as they could againſt their fatall *Thraldome*: yet wearied and *beaten out* at length with the *continuall* miſeries of a *Civill war*, they gently *ſtand*, whilſt *Auguſtus* beſtrides them, in a *habit* that might not too much *ſtartle* them. As their *King*, they had ra-

ther *dye* than *endure* him; but as *Auguſtus*, the (*p*) *Prime* man of the *Common-wealth*, and *Commander* in *Chiefe*, (there was no remedy) they *muſt* be *willing* to receive him. (*So* when he ſaw hee could *not* force the *Royall Title downe* to his *Name*, he reſolves to *ſet up* his *Name* above the (*q*) *Title*.) And to this *New* Government they more and more *came off*; and yeelded, as they *found* themſelves more at *eaſe* and *plenty* in their New *thraldome*, than they had enjoyed in their former *freedome*. For indeed he did by the *Com. W.* as the *firſt* Romans (that wanted Wives) by the *Sabin* Virgins, or the *Benjamites* by the *Daughters* of (*r*) *Shiloh*, ſeiſed them *firſt* by *force*, yet after *courted* them and wonne their *Love*: His Government *commenced* in a *Rape*, but *determined* in a contentfull *marriage* betwixt him and the *hearts* of his People. For ſuch was his true *Policy* and *Prudence*, that as hee made them *know* he had a *Hand* to *command* them, ſo he let them withall ſenſibly *feele*, that hee had a *Heart* alſo to *love* and *protect* them.

And look what the *Romans* did by their *Liberty*, the ſame doe *many* in the world by *Religion*. They *hold* it *out* and *make* it *good* till they be reduc'd to *ſtraights*, and then they *ſurrender* it upon *Conditions*. Even *good* men (*ſome*) that ſeem to love the Truth *well*, and contend *earneſtly* a while for the *Faith*, being *borne-downe* with the forcible *ſtreame* of Times, *diverted* and *call'd off* by the *Neceſſities* of Life, at length *give way* to the encroachments of *Errour*; and *yield*, it may be, *themſelves* to her *Importunity*, under a *maske* of *Truth* and *Holineſſe*. And *much more* will *others* comply with her, being involved in the *like* troubles, *eſpecially* when they *ſee* her *empowerd*, to diſpenſe *Protections*, *Privileges* and *Reliefe* to her *Followers*. For this perſwades them ſtrongly to *believe*, that their *Intereſt* is *wrapt up* in the folds of her *Traine*.

And if the ſaid Troubles, *Neceſſities* and *Straights* be *contrived* to *ſerve* ſome Politick *Deſignes*, (as ſometimes ſuch *State-racks* are *made*, by Artificiall *torments*, and forced *throwes* of *made*-neceſſities, to *urge* and preſſe a *Common Wealth* to the *production* of certaine *Ends*) then they admit of *no ordinary* reliefe, *but* from the *partiall* hands of the *Contrivers* and Executioners.

p *Cuncta diſcordiis civilibus feſſa nomine* Principis *ſub Imperium accepit*. C. Tac.

q As *Julius* before him, when more faintly ſaluted King, by his Party, than hee expected, *Non Rex ſum, ſed Cæſar*. And both their *Names* were retained by their Succeſſours, as the richeſt Plumes of their Imperiall Creſt.

r Judg. 21.

cutioners. And in *ſuch* caſes *Truth* muſt look to be *heavy* laden, and her Followers *diſcountenanced* and *affronted*, as *not* uſually *comporting* with ſuch irregular *Deſignes*, and *by*-Intereſts; which ordinarily are *carefull*, that thoſe that *will not be for* them, *ſhall not* be able to doe much *againſt* them.

So the *Turks*, not deeming it ſo ſafe to *breake* Chriſtianity (at *once*) amongſt the *Greeks* (whom by force of *unjuſt Armes* they had *Conquered*) reſolve to *clog*, and *load* it ſoundly, to *tire* and *ſtarve* it out by *Degrees*; by *taking away* the maintenance and *Revennes* of their *Schooles* and *Miniſters*, burthening them with *heavy Taxes*, ſubjecting them to the *Inſolencies* of their *Janizaries* and *Souldiers*, *ſlighting* their Petitions and *Complaints*, partiall diſtribution of *Juſtice*, and *debarring* them of all *Offices* of *Truſt*, Power or *Dignity* (Military and Civill) till they *turne* to bee of their *owne Sect* and Profeſſion. And *ſo* though they *forbeare* expreſſely to *Command* a conformity to their *Opinions* and *Wayes*, yet they doe no leſſe than *Imperiouſly commend* it; yea and by *Civill torments* they *enforce* it. Thus Nationall troubles, whether *found* or *framed*, contribute *much* to the *advance* of *Satans* Plots upon *Religion*: both as they are ſtrong *Diverſions*, and great *diſadvantages* to the Profeſſors thereof.

3. Thirdly, may not *this* alſo be ſome *Reaſon* thereof? That *great* Afflictions and *Diſtreſſes* doe naturally *diſpoſe* the minds of men to *receive* any thing urg'd upon *Conſcience*. The Holy *Scripture* ſeemes to intimate no leſſe; pointing at *Ahaz* with *wonder*, (though a wicked man) that in his *Diſtreſſe* hee was yet more *obſtinate* and untractable. *This is that King* Ahaz! Surely *Teachers* in *all Religions* that intend their *Worke*, doe carefully *wait* and *improve* ſuch *opportunities*, to facilitate and *further* their *infuſions*, be they *true* or *falſe*. The *Jeſuits*, that heighten their Diſciples to the very *quinteſſence* of Romiſh *perfection*, make their *impoſed* Mortifications and *Artificiall Afflictions*, the very *body* and *ground* of all their *extractions*. They'll *not* lay you a *ſtone* towards their *building* till they have throughly *beaten downe* the *ground* they intend to worke upon. Therefore their *firſt* entertainments of their Probationers and *Younglings* are extreme *Watchings*, *Faſtings*, *Solitude*, *Whippings*,

The Devill choſe his time to tempt our Saviour, when he had beene long faſting and in ſolitude.

pings, hard *Lodgings*, (upon a *Board*, it may bee, on the *Ground*, and that in *Vaults* ſometimes amongſt the *Dead*) All which ſo *deaden* and *diſpirit* the *Rationall* part, and ſo nouriſh *feares*, *ſorrowes* and *melancholicke* Diſpoſitions, that they are then ready to *cloſe* with *any* thing, that weares but the *Notion* of *Truth* or *Duty*.

4. And *laſtly*, is there not *ſomething* likewiſe in *this*? that *heavy* and *laſting Calamities* put men upon *New* thoughts and *endeavours*, how to expedite and *worke* themſelves *out* of them. And ſuch thoughts with *darke* and naturall men, oftentimes *prevaile* to make *triall*, whether *Change* of Religion, may not bring with it a *New* and *better Condition*. It was not only the reſolution of *Ahaz*, 2 *Chron.* 28. 23. *Becauſe the gods of the Kings of Syria helpe them, therefore will I Sacrifice unto them that they may helpe me*; But it was a conſideration of remarkable Influence upon *Gods* owne *People*. *They* (the wicked and ungodly) *are not in trouble as other men are, neither are they plagued like other Men——but they have more than heart can wiſh. Therefore his owne people returne hither, &c.*

Pſal. 73. 5, 7, 10.

Thus *Satan* ſerves his turne of *Times* and *Seaſons* to propagate and diſperſe his *Deluſions*; Eſpecially times of *Reformation*, and times of trouble and *Common Calamity*: And that's our *Third Obſervation*; wherein having a little *exceeded*, wee ſhall *try* to make the *Reader* amends, with the *more* compendious *diſpatch* of thoſe that are to *follow*.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The fourth *Obſervation. That Satan, leſt his Impoſtures ſhould bee diſcovered and rejected by the Light and Authority of the Holy* Scriptures, *endeavoureth mainly by his Inſtruments to ſhake and* weaken, *and (if poſſible) to* ſhake off *and utterly breake their Power and* Authority (*in whole or part*) *over the Conſciences of men.*

NOtwithſtanding *all* that hath been *ſaid*, that *Satans Deſigne* is chiefely upon the *Godly* party, that hee practiſeth to *deceive* them with pretended *Light* and *Truths*, and *ſerves* himſelfe of the fitteſt *Seaſons* for that *purpoſe*; Yet all *this* might be to *little purpoſe*, and the *danger* not ſo very *great*, ſo long as there is a *certaine* knowne *Rule* and *Touch-ſtone* of *Truth*, the Holy *Scriptures*, to have *recourſe* unto upon *all* occaſions as lively *Oracles*, by the high *Authority* and Divine *light* whereof, all *Doctrines* may be *diſcerned* and *diſcovered*; whether they be *reall*, ſolid and *ſubſtantiall* Truths, or elſe but *counterfeit* and *ſophiſticated*.

All which this Arch-enemy well knowing, addes *this* Helliſh piece of ſubtlety to the former, *That the Holy Scriptures* (the onely true Touchſtone of all Doctrines and Opinions in matters of *Religion*) *be* (as much as may be) *Declined and Waved, Their Authority wholly ſhaken off and deſpiſed, or* at leaſt ſo *ſlighted weakned and wreſted*, that they may be of ſtrength no where, and in no ſenſe, but onely for his *Advantage*. *Obſerv. IV.*

It is a *Principle* received amongſt all *wiſe* men, that *Religion is not of a Naturall* or *Rationall production*, as to the *exiſtence* and actuall conſtitution thereof: For although there be common, and *Naturall Principles* within us, prompting mankinde univerſally *to* ſome *Religion*, (and therefore there bee *ſeverall things* (as that excellent *Charon* obſerves) wherein *all Religions* in the world *agree*;) Yet the exceeding *variety* which is found, in reſpect of *Religion*, throughout the whole *world*, doth ſufficiently

teſtifie, that there are *no naturall Principles* in man, for the ſhaping and *forming* either of our *Beliefe* or *Worſhip* of God. *For* if ſuch there *were*, there would alſo naturally be as full a *concurrence* and agreement in *Religion*, as in matters of Juſtice and *Righteouſnes* betwixt man and man: whereof there is a certain *Common-Rule* & Standard, the *Law* of *Nature* and *Nations*.

And as *Religion* cannot be extracted from *Reaſon* within, ſo neither *ought* it to bee received from any *other Authority* without, but *onely* from *God* himſelfe. *For*, it muſt needs bee, that *hee* onely for whom the *worke* is *done*, and in whoſe Service wee are retained, muſt have the *onely right* to appoint and *direct* it.

Even in the ſtate of *Innocency*, whilſt the glory of the *Divine Image* upon Man was as yet *unblemiſhed*, and Man had within himſelfe thoſe generall *Principles* of Wiſedome and Holines whereby hee was *perfect* in that *Sphere* of being wherein God had *created* him: Yet the ſtricteſt and moſt immediate *Rule* of *Religion* (and upon the matter the *onely*, for the reſt were not of *Religion* but *Nature*) he had *immediately* and externally from *God*. *Of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill thou ſhalt not eate*, *&c.* Gen. 2. Gen. 2. 17.

As for the firſt appointments of Religious *Worſhip*, Sacrifices &c. after the Fall, it is *not manifeſt* in what way man received them from God: Whether by vocall and *ſenſible Direction*, or by inward and ſecret *Inſpiration*. But certaine it is, the *Credenda*, the things to be believed, matters of *Faith* were *externally* and audibly *exhibited* from *God* to Man. *Gen.* 3. 15.

Theſe were the firſt *Rootes* from which all *Religion* was propagated in the World; the Rules whereof were carefully preſerved in ſome of the Families of the *Patriarchs*, and Sacredly tranſmitted by *tradition* to Poſterity; *God* of his Soveraigne Wiſedome and Goodneſſe, *adding* to thoſe firſt *Diſcoveries* of his Divine pleaſure, from time to time, as his unſearchable Wiſedome *thought fit*, and the *neceſſities* of his true and faithfull Worſhippers (the *Church*) required.

But the generality of Man-kinde, through the corruption of *Nature*, and Seducements of *Satan*, being turned aſide from the

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Religion, and way of Worship which God had *appointed*; and growing dayly more and more *luxuriant* in their *Inventions*, Innovations and *Corruptions*, (not onely concerning the *Manner* of Worship and Forme of Religion, but the very *Object* thereof;) It pleased the *Divine* Wisedome, to *forme* the Religion, and way of Worship whereby himselfe would be honoured and served, into some *certaine way* and Method; by unvariable and certaine *Rules* and *Written Lawes*, exhibited in *part* immediately by (*a*) *God*, and *partly* by *Holy men* that were *inspired* by the Spirit of God for that purpose; who, alwayes, as they tendered any *new Discoveries* from God, were assisted by the same *Spirit* to make confirmation and *evidence* thereof, by true *Miracles* and Signes, reall, yet supernaturall, and *above* all humane *Art* or Invention whatsoever. For *we must know this first*, as a Principle, saith Holy *Peter*, that *the Prophecie came not in Old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*.

a Exod. 20.

2 Pet. 1. 21.

Thus those holy Writings (commonly called the *Scriptures* and the *Bible*, for their singular *excellency* and *transcendent* Nature) came to their being and perfection, by severall parts and Degrees; *God having at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoken in times past to the Fathers by the Prophets; And in these last dayes unto us by his Sonne*. Of which holy Writings in times past the People of the *Jewes* were the onely *Trustees*, unto whom were *committed the Oracles of God* (*b*). Which was one of the *Prime* advantages and Privileges of that Nation above all the rest of the world besides.

Heb. 1. 1, 2. πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως

b Rom. 3. 2.

These Holy *Scriptures* containe in them *all* the *minde* and *will* of God, which the Divine Wisedome thinkes *fit* that *man* should *know* or be made *privie* to, and acquainted with: God therein *copying out* fairely that first *Law* which at the Creation was very clearely engraven upon our *Natures*, but by Corruption and Time was growne almost *illegible*; and also prescribing *further* unto man *whatsoever* God requires him to *believe* and *doe*, by way of Honour and Service to his *Maker*, in the observing whereof he shall be happy and *blessed* for ever.

And these Sacred Writings are the true *Word* of *God*, the onely

onely *Canon* and Authentick *Rule* of all that is to be *beleeved* or *practiſed* of man, *eſpecially* in matters of (*c*) *Religion*: whereof they are both the *Law* and *Judge*, determining, (in all things which God hath ſtated and ordained as of *neceſſity* to *Salvation*, and to his owne *Glory*, by way of mans *Duty*) what is *good* and what *Evill*, what is *according* to *God*, and what *contrary* to his bleſſed Will and *appointment*. For if any thing be *hurtfull*, here it is *condemned*, and if *profitable* and good, it is here found, and (*d*) *approved*.

c *Canon & norma, teſtis & judex ἐντιμος ad quem exhibenda omnis de rebus divinis doctrina.* Camer.

d *Quicquid homo extra didicerit, ſi noxium eſt hic damnatur, ſi utile eſt his invenitur.* Aug.

And thoſe manifold *Titles* of honour which are given to the Holy *Scriptures*, report no leſſe of their Purity, *Perfection*, Authority, *Efficacy* and *Sufficiency* for the purpoſes above mentioned. It were almoſt endles to recount the particulars. They are called, not onely a (*e*) *Lamp* and *Light* for Diſcovery and Direction; but the *Truth*, the (*f*) *Faith*, a *ſure Word*, a *perfect* and *royall Law*; the *Record*, Witneſſe and *Counſell* of *God*, the Rule and *Law of* (*g*) *Truth* and Faith, &c. And their efficacy deſerves them all, and makes the Titles good: For they are *profitable for Doctrine, Reproofe, Correction and Inſtruction in* (*h*) *righteouſnes*. Yea they *make wiſe to ſalvation*; and *make the Man of God complete* and *perfect, entire*, (without (*i*) Fractions, Mutilations or defect of any part of the ſpirituall man) throughly furniſhed, *&c.* The Word of God is (*k*) *perfect, converting ſoules, Pure, enlightning the eyes*, and *ſure, very ſure, ſetled for ever in Heaven*, pure as *ſilver ſeven times refined*, free from *all* droſſe. And therefore *Precious* as *Gold, more precious than much fine Gold, than thouſands of Gold and Silver*. Throughly *tryed* it ſelfe, and *trying* all Doctrines and Opinions whatſoever.

e Pſa. 119. 105 Prov. 6. 23.

f Rom. 16. 26.

g Mat. 2. 6.

h 2 Tim 3. 16.

i ἄρτιος, ἐξηρτισμένος

k Pſal. 19. 7. 95. 5. 119. 8. Pſal. 12. 6. 19. 10. 119. 72.

And this is very clearly and fully laid downe in that Generall *Rule, To the Law, and to the Teſtimonies, if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no light in them*. No *light*, that is, no True Viſion, nothing as from God; (for ſo *light* and *darkneſſe* are uſed and taken, *Mica.* 3. 6, 7. *Therefore night ſhal be unto you that yee ſhall not have a Viſion, and it ſhall be dark unto you that yee ſhall not divine; and the Sunne ſhall goe down over the Prophets, and the day ſhall be darke over them,——for there is no Anſwer of God.*) What ever Doctrine (then) or *Opinion* is

Iſa. 8. 20.

diſſonant

diſſonant from the *Word* is (ſo farre) *erroneous* and diſconſonant with *God*: Which may bee clearely enough evidenced to our underſtandings from any of the afore-mentioned *Titles*. For inſtance; Why is the Word called the *Law of Truth*, and the *Law* of Faith, if God hath not in them determined, directed and limited *Truth* and *Faith*, as *Men* by their *Lawes* determine and limit what is *lawfull* and *unlawfull* for them that live under them? For as a *Prince* determineth Controverſies and Caſes by his *Lawes*, ſo doth *God* by his written (*l*) *Word*.

(*l*) *Deus in Scripturis loquens ſupremus controverſiarum Judex.*

Now *all this* makes much *againſt Satan* and his *Intereſt*, (which ſtands in full *Oppoſition* to all the proceedings of *God*.) And *therefore* he ſtrives and *labours* ſo much againſt the *Word*. He would extinguiſh the *Light*, becauſe it diſcovereth and ſcattereth his *Darkneſſe*; and break the *Rule*, becauſe it manifeſteth his *crookednes*; and caſt away the *Touch-ſtone*, becauſe it diſcovers the baſe *droſſineſſe* of his *counterfeit* Doctrines and opinions, whereby hee *abuſeth* the World, and *cheats* many of their poore *ſoules*.

His practices and workings againſt the Scriptures may bee conſidered under foure Heads.

1. *Firſt* this, He hath ever been very carefull to *obſtruct* the paſſage and *free-courſe* of the Word, that the Holy *Scriptures* might not come to the knowledge of the *World*.

It is not our *Buſines* to ſpeake here of his marveilous *care* and *diligence*, to keep the *Nations* of the World *of old* from knowing or believing any thing of the Holy *Scriptures*: Which was ſuch, that amongſt all the great and learned *Philoſophers* and *Hiſtorians*, that *compaſſed* Sea and Land to enrich themſelves with the *knowledge* of *truth*, (of *Nature*, *Religion*, *Laws* and *Hiſtory*) there is *none* found to have had ſo much *acquaintance* with the Contents of the Holy *Scriptures*, as probably they *might* have had, by *Tradition* onely, in their owne Countreyes. What light they had was onely *Rationall*, not ſpirituall: and *if ought* of a *higher* Nature ſeeme couchant in ſome of their Writings, it was yet but μίγμα *quoddam*, a *miſcellanie* of Truth with their own lying and malignant *Fancies*. How *uncertainly* did the *chiefeſt* of them deliver themſelves concerning the very *Beginning* of

Cuneus. Rep. H.

the World? Their *Interpretours* cannot agree what their Opinion thereof was, whether it had *any* beginning, or was from everlasting. *Plato* in his *Timæus* makes an Egyptian Prieſt to Schoole (*m*) poore *Solon* for his groſſe Ignorance, not onely of *many* precedent *Conflagrations* and *Inundations* of the *World*, but likewiſe of the *Records of eight or nine thouſand yeares* then paſt, of one particular City. *The Affaires and Government of this City of ours* (ſaith hee) (*n*) *for* a matter of *eight thouſand yeares* are *Recorded in* our *holy Writ*: and *for thoſe of the ninth thouſand, I ſhall but briefely touch them now, but hereafter, at more leiſure, more largely expound them out of the Books themſelves.* Thus he, under the diſguiſe of an Egyptian, which not being diſowned or contradicted by himſelfe, diſcovereth his *pure Ignorance* of the Holy *Scriptures*. And their *Hiſtorians* and *Poets* proclame no leſſe by their wretched *reports* of the *Jewiſh* (*o*) *Religion*, of their comming out of (*p*) *Egypt*; Of *Moſes* Lawes, as if they were *Savage* and *Barbarous*, that *no Jew ſhould direct a Wanderer into his Way*, or a *Thirſty man to a Fountaine*, *unleſſe he were of the Jewiſh Religion*. See *Juvenal. l. 5. Sat. 14.*

Marcil. Fic. in Timæum. Plat. m ὁ Σόλων Σόλων, Ἕλλησι αὖ παῖδες ἐστέ.

n ἐκ τῶν ἱερῶν γραμμάτων ἐκτανύσασθαι ἐπὶ πλέον ἐστὶν ἀριθμὸς γενεῶν.

o *Plutarch* and other great Authors, that they worſhipped an Aſſe.

p *C. Tacitus* That being a Nation hated of the gods, they were at the command of *Jupiter Hammon* tranſported out of Egypt by King *Bochoris*.

And as hee kept the Holy Scriptures in a manner *wholly* from the knowledge of the *Heathens* in thoſe *ancient* Times, ſo wee ſhall finde, that (through the permiſſion of *God*) hee hath ſtirred up powerfull and active Inſtruments in all *ſucceeding* ages, to (*q*) *hinder* their *free paſſage*; as well *to* thoſe that had *no knowledge* of them, as *with* thoſe who in ſome ſort had *received* and *own'd* them. To ſay nothing of the *attempts* that have been made, to *deſtroy* and root out the very *being* of the Holy Scriptures in the World; and to prevent their paſſage to *other Nations* of the World; it is very *marvailous* to conſider the *care* that hath been *taken*, to *with-hold* them from the *knowledge* and *peruſall* of the generality of thoſe that are called *Chriſtians*. For, as if his ſecret *practices* upon every *ſoule*, were not ſufficient to *divert* from the (*r*) *duty* of reading and ſtudy of thoſe *Holy Writings*, (which our corrupt *Nature* is *backward* enough unto) He hath ſo farre prevailed throughout the *Romiſh Juriſdiction*, as to *diſcourage* from that *Duty* by the *penalties* of Cruell and Tyrannicall *Lawes*, Yea and by pernicious *Principles*, (equivalent to ſuch *Lawes* of

q 2 Theſ. 3. 1, 2. 1 Theſ. 2. 18.

r Deut 6. 6, 7. Pſal. 1. 1, 2.

re-

reſtraint) in many *other parts* alſo of the commonly-reputed *Chriſtian-World*. And are not the uncomfortable *fruits* of Satans practices of this *nature* at this day too evidently to be *ſeene* in many parts of this *Britiſh* Iſland? Wherein although *Chriſtianity* hath been univerſally *profeſſed*, and the *Reformation* thereof from Poperie by the generality *owned*, yet *multitudes* might be found, who are utterly *unacquainted* with the Holy *Scriptures*; yea they thinke it part of their *Duty*, not to be ſo *bold* as to *meddle* with them or *ſearch* into them.

2. *Secondly*, As his *Diligence* hath been *great* to keep out the Scriptures where they have *not* been *knowne*, ſo his malicious ſubtlety hath been as *active*, to ſtirre up *Oppoſition* againſt them whereſoever they have been known and *entertained*: And that by *Inſtruments* of *ſeverall* tempers and *Conſtitutions*, who though they all *face* ſeverall wayes, behold not one another with any *friendly* aſpect, yet like *Sampſons Foxes*, they all carry *firebrands in their Tailes*, and are bound upon the ſame Deſigne of *Satan*; which is to *burne* and deſtroy (if they could) our ſtanding *Corne*, the Holy *Scriptures*, the Word of God, our *Bread of Life*, and the very lively-hood of our *Soules*.

And theſe *Oppoſers* of the Scriptures may be reduced to *foure ſorts*, the Prophane *Atheiſt*, the blaſphemous *Enthuſiaſt*, or *Antiſcriptūriſt*, the ſuperſtitious *Papiſt*, and the ſcrupulous and ſeduced *Rejecters* of the Writings of the *Old Teſtament*. We muſt but obſerve, and ſo diſmiſſe the *three* former: To the *fourth*, we ſhall briefely offer ſome things to be conſider'd of.

The Prophane *Atheiſticall* ſort in their oppoſition of the Scriptures are *materially* Heretiques: but not formally. They *reproach* the Word and *blaſpheme* the *Scriptures*, they *ſcorne* and deſpiſe thoſe that are *ſtudious* of them, and converſant with thoſe ſacred *writings*, & by their *corſe* Principles, home-ſpun *by-words*, foule *aſperſions*, and barbarous *railings*, do greatly *hinder the free courſe of the Word* in places and Families where they live, *eſpecially* if of any *ranke* or *Relation* that hath Influence upon *others*. But, alas, the wretches doe it either *Ignorantly*, or *Impudently*, againſt *Conviction*, and againſt their owne *Conſciences*. Theſe are as it were the *Devills Clubmen*, againſt the Truth and Hoy

Scriptures, *the Law of Truth*; they ſtrike *downe-right* blowes, and we *know* where to have them: to be ſure *God* doth.

The Blaſphemous *Antiſcripturiſts* are they, which having made *profeſſion* of *ſearching* the Scriptures, to finde the *Treaſure* of Truth, and to diſcover the minde and will of *God*, doe bring up an *ill report* of thoſe Holy *Writings* (worſe than that of the *Spies* concerning the Land of (*ſ*) *Canaan*) as if they had *not that* in them, which is *believed* and expected *of them*: Yea they proceed ſo farre (being acted by the *Devill*) as to *reproach* and *Traduce* thoſe ſacred *Oracles* of *God*, with *language* too *vile* and *unworthy* to be repeated, or once mentioned amongſt *Chriſtians*. And this is an abſolute and *formall* Hereſie; an horrid *Sinne* and a fearefull *puniſhment* both in *one*. For, *Becauſe when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankefull, but became vaine in their Imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened: profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe they became fooles*, Rom. 1.21. Yea, *for this cauſe God ſends them ſtrong Deluſions that they ſhould believe a lye; that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſnes*. Who notwithſtanding they *colour* their deteſtable *Hereſie*, with pretence of *Inſpirations* of the Holy *Ghoſt*, and *improvements* above and *beyond* all *Scripture*, are yet neither better nor other than the *Devils Engineers*, and *Traine* of Artillery; whoſe worke is to *undermine* and *blow up* the very *Foundations* of Faith, and True *Religion*, and *batter downe* the Store-houſe of all our *Comforts*, with the *Walls* and Bulwarks of our Peace and happines. *Such* a Generation there hath been in *former times*, (known by ſundry *Names* and Diſtinctions) which were *bold* to broach their Opinions under the Government of *Heathens* (who rather *countenanced* than reſtrain'd them:) But of later ages, ſuch *Monſters* have been *ſeldome ſeen*, till the warme *Sun-ſhine* upon the corruption of our unhappy *Earth* hath *bred* and *cheriſhed* them: which not onely now appeare as *Canaanites* in the land, for *Snares* and *Thornes* to the poore Iſraelites of the preſent Generation, but to arraigne theſe times (to all ſucceeding ages) of Monſtrous *Impiety*, for ſuffering ſuch pernicious and *damnable* Hereſies to be *revived*, and *tranſmitted* to Poſterity in *Print*, *without* any *effectuall* courſe taken to *ſuppreſſe* them.

(*ſ*) Num. 13.32.

Rom. 1.21,22.

2 Theſ. 2. 11, 12.

Joſh. 23. 13.

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A third ſort of *Scripture-oppoſers* are *Papiſts:* and theſe indeed *profeſſe* to owne the Authority of *Scriptures* in Generall, but they *ſeem* ſuperſtitiouſly to *oppoſe* the *abuſe* and *prophanation* of them by the Common *People*, and to *prevent* ſuch abuſe, they *forbid* them the *uſe* of thoſe Heavenly *Evidences* of every Chriſtians *Inheritance*. But, pretend they what they will, it is *apparent* enough, that this *Inhibition* of the *Scriptures* to the *People*, is *not* ſo much of *Superſtition*, as *Deſigne* and *Policy* on the *Popes* part and his ſubordinate *Hierarchy* (*t*). For what was it that conducted that man of ſinne into his *Chaire*, and advanced all the Rabble of *Rome* to ſuch a *height*, (and *upholds* them at this day therein) but their *ſlighting* of the Authority of *Scriptures*, and pretending to *Miracles* and *Revelations*, with conſtant *infallible Directions* of the *Holy Ghoſt*? Doe they not *alter*, decline, reſume, and *uſe* Scriptures as they *liſt*, *authoriſing* onely ſuch *gloſſes* and *Tranſlations* as may beſt *ſerve* their owne *turnes*? Yea, it is very *notoriouſly* knowne, how in their Writings they (*u*) *viliſie* and *diſgrace* them, as a *dead letter*, *Inſufficient*, *a leaden Rule*, a *noſe of Wax*, and other ſuch *baſe* and *Antichriſtian* Language, wherewith they have furniſh'd the *Antiſcripturiſts* of our times. This *Popiſh* Generation *Satan* uſeth as a treacherous and *perfidious party* of his Agents, that *knowingly* fight *againſt* the *Scriptures*, whilſt they *pretend* to ſide *with* the *Scriptures*: they pretend to *owne* their *Authority*, but yet *impriſon them*, and *with-hold the Truth in unrighteouſneſſe*.

t To ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh their own Traditions. Mark. 7. 9.

u *Bellarmin*, *Peron*, and many others their chiefeſt Writers.

Laſtly, there is *another ſort* of Scripture-oppoſers, (who are moſt of all to be *pitied*,) that ſeem to be wholly *for Truth*, they weare a *Bible* (as it were) in their *Banners*, and will *determine* nothing but by the *Scriptures*, they will *trie* both *Spirits* and *Doctrines* by the Word of *God*; but when you come *up* cloſe to them, they *acknowledge onely* the Scriptures of the *New Teſtament*, as to all Deciſions and determinations of *Faith* and *Duty*; *rejecting* the Authority of the Scriptures of the *Old Teſtament*, as being *antiquated* and Out of Date. And *theſe* (however perhaps they doe *not thinke it*) will be found to be a *miſdirected party* of Truths *friends*, acting *dangerouſly againſt* both the *Scriptures* of Truth, and the *God* of Truth, *and* doing very great *Service* to

the Common *enemy*. For the *three* former our purpoſe was onely to *obſerve* them: but to *theſe* ſomewhat would be *offered* with a Spirit of *meekneſſe*, tending to *reduce* them; which we ſhall referre to the next *Chapter*.

CHAP. VII.

A Digreſſion *to ſome Conſiderations from the* New *Teſtament, which aſſert and vindicate the Authority of the Scriptures of the* Old. *With ſhort Anſwers to ſome of their chiefe Objections.*

WE heard in the laſt Chapter, the *Nature*, *End*, and *Sufficiency* of the Holy *Scriptures* in Generall: chiefely for the preſcribing, limiting and trying of all matters of *Faith* and Religious *Worſhip*. As alſo *why*, and *how*, Satan laboureth what hee can againſt them. 1. *Hindring* the *Paſſage* of the Word to thoſe that *want* it. 2. *Oppoſing* the *Authority* thereof among thoſe that *have* it: and *this*, eſpecially, by Profane *Atheiſts*, Blaſphemous *Antiſcripturiſts*, Superſtitious and crafty *Papiſts*, and the ſeduced *Rejecters* of the *Old Teſtament*. Wee ſhould now proceed to *two other* particulars, by way of *further* Diſcoverie of His Practices againſt them. viz. 3. That he endeavoureth to *corrupt* their *Purity*, and wreſt them to his ends. And 4. To *ſlight* and weaken their *power* and *efficacy*. But *before* I proceed to theſe, I ſhall crave leave to offer ſomething (by way of *digreſſion*) towards the *ſatisfying* and *ſetling* of thoſe, who are ſo farre *ſeduced* in their *judgements*, as to *queſtion* the Authority of the Books of the *Old Teſtament*, *as yet* owning, and adhering to thoſe of the *New*.

Our Bleſſed *Saviour*, although hee thought fit to deliver the *Myſteries* of Chriſtianity *darkly*, and in *Parables*; yet taught and laid downe the *Duties* of Chriſtians very plainly, and *clearly*. Amongſt which *this* was one, to *ſearch the Scriptures*, John 5.39. And *other* Scriptures there were *then* none to ſearch, but *onely* thoſe

thoſe of the *Old Teſtament*, (for *none* of the *New* were written till *after* his Death and *Reſurrection.*)

And it is very *remarkable*, that our Saviour *Declares*, that neither *himſelfe* did, nor the Holy *Ghoſt* (when hee came) *ſhould* ſpeake, either of them, *of Himſelfe*, but from the *Father*. Not *Chriſt*. *I have not ſpoken* (ſaith he) *of my ſelfe, but the Father which ſent me, he gave me Commandement what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeake.* And *whatſoever I ſpeake, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeake*, John 12. 49, 50. *Not* the Holy *Ghoſt*, John 16. 13. *Howbeit when hee the Spirit of Truth is come, He Will guide you into all Truth: for he ſhall not ſpeake of Himſelfe, but whatſoever he ſhall heare, that ſhall he ſpeake.* The words are *plaine*. So that neither *Chriſt* nor the *Spirit* ſpake of themſelves, but *miniſterially* from the *Father*; who is the *ſame* and changeth not: Hee *ſpake* in *Times paſt by the Prophets*, and in *theſe laſt Dayes* in his Sonne, and by his Spirit.

Joh. 7. 17, 18
Joh. 14. 10.
Joh. 16. 13.
Heb. 1. 1.

Object. Yea, but both the *Sonne* and the *Spirit* ſpake that from the *Father* in the *Goſpell*, which *calls off* our Attention from the Writing of the *Old* Teſtament.

Anſw. Did they ſo? let that be *judg'd* and determin'd by *themſelves*. For our *Saviour* firſt; whilſt he walked with his Diſciples, doe you finde that ever he ſcattered the *leaſt* word towards the *Diſauthorizing* or repealing of the *Scriptures* that were then in being? (Although *many* of the *Jewes* then, even *Idolized* the *Law* and the Prophets in a carnall way, as at *this* Day.) But on the *contrary*, was he not *zealouſly* frequent in *aſſerting* their Authority? Did he not ordinarily *owne* them, and *quote* them in his *Preaching*? Doth he not *upbraid* the *Jewes* with their *Ignorance* of the Scriptures, and referre all their *Errours* in Doctrine to *that* onely *cauſe*, Marc. 12. 24. *Doe ye not therefore (a) erre, becauſe yee know not the Scriptures?* Yea, his *invectives* were very *ſharpe* againſt thoſe that had *corrupted* their ſenſe, or *invaded* their *Authority* upon *any* the moſt plauſible and ſmooth *pretences* whatſoever.

a This was ſpoken to the *Sadduces*, who denyed all the Writings of the *Old Teſt.* ſave the five Books of *Moſes*, as ſome affirme.

Take *one Inſtance*; Doe but read and obſerve with what a *ſtirring* ſpirit, and with what *ſmartnes* of *Language*, hee ſets himſelfe

himſelfe to *vindicate* and reſcue the Holy Scriptures, from thoſe *ſlightings* and *indignities*, which the *Phariſees*, by their corrupt *gloſſes* and practiſes, had put upon them, to the *diminiſhing* of their high *Authority*, and the *blemiſhing* of their native *Glory*. The place is *Mark* 7. 8, 9, 10. concerning the *Baptiſme* or waſhing of *cups*, *&c.* and the Duties of the *fifth* Commandement. The generall *charge* is, that they were a pack of *Hypocrites*, verſ. 6. Prove that. Why (ſaith he) *yee ſet up your owne* conceits *above the Scriptures*, (and proves it out of *Eſay*, v. 6, 7. that thoſe that doe ſo are *Hypocrites.*) Name *one* Scripture ſo depoſed. I might *many* (ſaith our Saviour, but this for one; *Moſes ſaid*, Honour thy Father and thy Mother: and who ſo curſeth, *&c.* let him dye the Death: *but yee ſay, thus*, and thus:———*That* indeed was one of *Moſes Lawes*, and a very *harſh* one to be put in *execution* in the dayes of the *Meſſiah*——Yea ſaith Hee, it is the *Commandement of God*, (verſ. 8.) and *ye* unworthily *lay it* (*b*) *aſide*: yee *diſmiſſe* it, ye *remit* and *abate* the ſtrictnes of it, as *you* thinke *good*, that yee may (*c*) *ſtrengthen* and hold your *owne Devices*. Againe, it is the *Commandement of God*, and yee *fairely* or *full well reject*, diſplace, *abrogate* it, (verſ. 9.) The words (*d*) import a *throwing-off* of Authority with a kiude of (*e*) *contempt*, And our *Saviour* obſerves it as a *Plot* and Deſigne amongſt them, to *ſlight* the *Scriptures*, that they might bring in and *eſtabliſh* the *erroneous opinions*, which they had raked out of the duſt of ſome of their Fore-fathers; yee *weaken* the one that yee may *ſtrengthen* the other; yee *abrogate* one that yee may *keep* the other. *Full well yee reject the Commandement of God*, that *yee may keepe your owne Traditions.* (So that our Saviour makes the very *ſame Obſervation* of *thoſe times*, that we have of theſe.) Yea thirdly, (for he *chargeth* them *thrice* upon the *ſame ground*) *Yee make the Word of God of none effect*: yee weaken, *antiquate* and *diſauthoriſe* it, (as the word *primarily* (*f*) ſignifies) and that not in this *one* point onely, (but he tells them twice over) *many other ſuch like things yee doe*, verſ. 8. & verſ. 13. So that our Saviour had his *choice* what one particular Command by them ſo abuſed he would pleaſe to *vindicate*, and makes choice of *this Morall* Law, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, and a Judiciall,

b ἀθετεῖτε τὴν ἐντολήν.

c στήσητε.

d χαλῶς ἀθετεῖτε τὴν ἐντολήν.

e So ἀθέτησις is uſed in reference to the Ceremoniall Law, Heb. 7. 18. and to Sin, Heb. 9. 26.

f Ἀκυροῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ. *Robore privantes, Authoritate ſpoliantes, &c.*

Judicial; *Who ſo curſeth Father or Mother, let him dye the death*: Bringing the *Branches* from *ſeverall* (*u*) Scriptures, to the *ſame Head*. Thus we ſee, in Our *Saviours* dayes the *Old*-Teſtament-*Scriptures* were *Authentick*. Exod. 20. 12. & 21. 17.

Object. Yes, and *ſo* was the *Ceremoniall Law* too, whilſt Chriſt *lived*: the Leapers muſt ſhew themſelves to the *Prieſt*; The Buyers and Sellers muſt be whipt out of the *Temple*; Chriſt himſelfe did eate the *Paſſeover*: but prove that the Scriptures of the *Old* Teſtament were in force *after* his *Death* and *Reſurrection*, when the *New* Teſtament was actually *confirmed* with the Death of the *Teſtator*, and *then* you doe ſomething.

Anſw. Nothing more eaſie to be proved than this. See *Luke* 24. 27. After his *Reſurrection*, walking to *Emmaus* with two of his Diſciples, He began at *Moſes* and all the *Prophets*, and *expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelfe*. And at another time, *verſ.* 44. *He ſaid unto them, theſe are the words which I ſpake unto you whilſt I was yet with you, &c.* So that our Saviours *preaching* to his Diſciples whilſt he *lived* & walked with them, was out of the *Scriptures*:—*That all things muſt be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moſes, and in the Prophets, and in the Pſalmes, concerning me*; The whole Old Teſt. *All* things in them concerning *Chriſt* muſt be *fulfilled*: and muſt not *all* things written in them concerning *Chriſtians* be fulfilled *too*? Muſt not the *Precept* and *Promiſes* be regarded that are given to *us*, when thoſe are ſo punctually accompliſhed that referre to Him.——*Then opened he their underſtandings that they might underſtand the Scriptures*. *What* need of *this*, if they were *now abrogated*? if their authority were *now* determined, their Time out and *expired*: To *what purpoſe* was this miraculous and *extraordinary* clearing of their *Underſtandings*? that they might diſcerne the *depth* and *fulneſſe* of them: Should it not rather have been, *Then opened he their underſtandings*, that they might *ſee* the *emptines* and *ſhallowne*s of thoſe *Scriptures*, if they were then to be *aboliſhed* for their inſufficiency? If the *Subſtance* of the *New* Teſtament were quite another thing, *and* that, whoſe very actuall *being* did (as ſome hold) *ipſo facto* remove and *diſcauthoriſe* the Writings of the *Old*, would not our *Saviour* rather Luke 24. 25, 27. Verſ. 44. Verſe 45.

have taken his Diſciples *off* from poring upon the *Old* Scriptures, and *opened* their *Underſtandings* to receive their Goſpell *Notions* in *another way*? Certainly he would: for he ſpent *not* his time on earth after his *Reſurrection*, in framing *ſnares* to *entangle* Chriſtians, but in making out ſweet *Conſolations* and cleare *directions* for their ſettlement and *improvement*. Now, for *Him* to inſiſt altogether upon the Scriptures of the *Old* Teſtament, when as hee intended they ſhould bee from that-very-time-forwards for ever *abrogated* and diſauthoriſed, (without any *intimation* of ſuch a *purpoſe*) would have been no other than a meere *Snare*, and a very *great* one too, to his *Diſciples*.——It followeth. *And he ſaid unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and riſe from the Dead the Third day: and that Repentance and Remiſſion of Sinnes ſhould be preached amongſt all Nations, &c.* From theſe words of our Saviour it is cleare, That he did *not urge* or command them to *believe* the Great things of the Goſpell by vertue of his owne *Authority*, (although queſtionleſſe he *might*, if ſo *he* had thought fit) *but* Hee wrought up and heightned their *Faith* by preaching the *Word*, the *Scriptures* of the *Old* Teſtament. He did not *introduce* and impoſe a *Doctrine* inconſiſtent *with* them, *but* he made-out his Goſpell-Doctrine *from* them, and proved it *by* them. *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved*: and *becauſe* theſe things were *written, therefore* it *behoved* that they ſhould *all* be, (thoſe on *Gods* part by production of *Providence*, and thoſe on *mans* by performance of *Duty*.) *That Chriſt ſhould dye and riſe againe, That repentance, &c. ſhould be preached*, and that they ſhould *begin at Jeruſalem, &c.* Yea it *ſo* behoved, that we may boldly *affirme*; That *whoſoever* had come as *Meſſiah*, if his Perſon, Doctrine, Doings and Sufferings had *not* been *according* to the Scriptures of the *Old Teſtament* hee had *not* been the *true-Chriſt*.

Verſe 46.

So that the *Old*-Teſtament-Scriptures were the *Rule*, Meaſure and *Touch-ſtone* to which our *Saviour* freely offered and *applyed* his *Perſon, Doctrine*, &c. to be *tryed* by *them*; and to receive *Credit* and *Beliefe*, not meerely from his *owne* Authority, but from their *Teſtimony* and *approbation*. And *now*, having found that which was tryed to be *perfect*, muſt wee needs *breake*

the

the *Rule*, and throw away the *Touch-ſtone*? having *received* their *Evidence*, ſhall wee now *ſlay* the *Witneſſes* for ſpeaking the *Truth*? Surely neither *Religion* nor *Reaſon* will allow it; nothing but meere *Deluſion* doth perſwade it.

Thus, we ſee, our Saviour, not onely *before* his Death, but *after* his *Reſurrection*, even *then* when the *New* Teſtament was in *actuall being* and *force*, *owned* and *honoured* the Holy Scriptures of the *Old* Teſtament.

Object. Yea, *Hee* ſpake to his Diſciples *then*, in their *owne Dialect*, and as they were able to beare it: but Hee *referres* them to the *Holy Ghoſt*, which was *to come* and teach them *all* things, *lead them into All truth*; and when they had the Holy Ghoſt *within* them in ſuch an extraordinary meaſure, *what need* had they of the Writings of the *Old* Teſtament. John 14. 26. & 16. 13.

Anſw. Nay, it is *evident* from that place in *Luke* laſt before mentioned, That *Chriſt* did not *therefore* chuſe to ſpeake to them from the *Scriptures*, that he might *condeſcend* to their *capacity*; for he *raiſed* their *capacity* to the *Scriptures* whereof he ſpake. *Then opened he their underſtandings that they might underſtand the Scriptures*: ſo that hee did not *lower* and ſinke his *Diſcourſe* to *their* apprehenſions; *but* hee *raiſed* (marvellouſly) their *underſtandings* to his High and Heavenly *Diſcourſe*, which Hee choſe to make out of the *Old-Teſtament*-Scriptures. Luke 24. Could he not as well have opened their underſtandings to receive the Goſpell *without* thoſe Scriptures, *if* it had not been to be diſpenced and taught *from* them, and *by* them?

But, *He referred them*, you ſay, *to the Holy Ghoſt*:——*Stand* then to that *reference*; and let us *ſee* what the Holy *Ghoſt* did in this caſe. Our *Saviour* told us aforehand, that the *Spirit*, when he came, *ſhould ſpeake nothing of himſelfe*; and wee *finde* it accordingly. For when the Holy *Ghoſt* firſt appeared, reſted *on* and *in* the Diſciples when they were *filled* therewith, had the gift of *Tongues*, and *ſpake as the Spirit* (within) endited, and *gave them utterance*. What did they *ſpeake*? *Invectives* againſt the *Scriptures*? (ſuch as *our* pretended-*Inſpired*-ones are full of, and their mouths over-flow with.) Surely *no*; But they that ſhall read the Notes of *Peters* Sermon, which he, (then full of the Holy Ghoſt) made to the *People*, might rather thinke, at firſt ſight, (as *they* of our *Saviour*) that *one of the Prophets* Acts 2.

of the Old Testament *was risen from the dead*. For *short* as his Sermon is, not above 20, or 22 verses, (*transported* with the Spirit) he runs through *seven* or *eight* severall places of *Scripture* of the *Old* Testament; which he so *lively* and vigorously menageth, and makes *use* of, that they *bring* him in no lesse than *three thousand* soules.

Acts 2. 14. to 36.

We might instance likewise in the *rest* of the Holy *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, who in *all* their Sermons to those that *knew* any thing of the Scriptures, raised their *Doctrinall* part from the Scriptures of the *Old* Testament. *Philip* the Deacon, a man *familiar* with the Holy *Ghost*, when he was sent out on purpose to convert the *Eunuch* (a Gentile) did he not preach *Christ* to him from the *Old* Testament, and take his Text out of *Isaiah*. *He began at the same Scripture ane preached to him Jesus*, Acts 8. 35. And surely, if this had *not* been the way of *Christ*, the Holy *Ghost* would have gone *another* way to worke, and *transported* them as farre *beyond* and *above* those Scriptures, *as any* the most raised *Enthusiasts*, (with all their Revelations and High-flowne conceits) are at *this day*.

Acts 8. 35.

Paul that great *Gospel*-Preacher and Writer, the great (*a*) *Defender* of the Faith, and (*b*) *Master-builder* of Christianity, *groundeth*, builds, bindes, and *cements all* with Scriptures of the *Old* Testament: Commends them *highly*, as the richest *Jewell* in the World. That they are *written for our learning*, (can teach us all) and if a *man of God*, they are able to *make him perfect* and *wise to salvation*. And therefore, yee see, he *improves* the *particular* Promises of the *Old* Testament, to the *generality* of Christians under the *New*, for the strengthening of *Faith*, and founds as it were a *new* Faith upon the *Old* Word. (*be content—for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*, Heb. 13. 5.) Yea builds it up to *Confidence*, upon the *same* Foundation, (*so that we may boldly say the Lord is my helper, I will not feare, &c.* v. 6.)

a Phil. 1. 17.
b 1 Cor. 3. 10.

Josh. 1. 5.

And as he founds Gospel-*graces* upon Old-Testament-*Promises*, so hee urgeth Gospell-*duties* from Old-Testament-*Precepts* and *Commandements*; and backs them with the *same* promises and threatnings *annexed*, yea strengthens his Argument from the

the very *circumſtance* of Order; and that to the *Gentiles* too, (*Eph.* 6. 1, 2, 3.) which if *aboliſhed*, were eſpecially as to *them*, altogether *uſeleſſe*. *Children obey your Parents in the Lord. Honour thy Father and Mother, (which is the firſt Commandement with promiſe) That it may be well with thee, and thou maiſt live long on the earth.* Eph. 6. 1, 2, 3.

Yea, *more* than all *this*, He urgeth the *Equity* of the very *Ceremoniall-Law*, not onely upon *Jewes*, but *Gentiles*. As in the caſe of Miniſters *maintenance*. 1 *Cor.* 9. After he had *reaſon'd* it *himſelfe*, verſe 7. *Who goes a Warfare, plants a Vineyard, feedes a Flock at his owne charge*, and for *nothing*, *&c?* He ſeemes to fortifie his *Artificiall* Argument by an *Authority* which might be *more convincing* and ſatisfying, verſe 8. *Say I theſe things as a Man, or doth not the Law ſay the ſame alſo? For it is written in the Law of Moſes, thou ſhalt not muzzle the mouth of the Oxe which treadeth out the Corne*——Yea but this was *Ceremoniall*, (and if ſome of our Goſpelliſts had then *been*, they would for this have *charg'd* him of *denying Chriſt* to bee come in the *Fleſh.*) But it it is *ſo* Ceremoniall, that it is written to *teach* us ſomething that is *Morall*. (Saith Hee) *Doth God take care for Oxen? Or ſaith hee it altogether for our ſakes? for our ſakes no doubt this is written, &c.* Marke it well: For *Our* ſakes, that are *Chriſtians*; *Ours*, *Jewes* and * *Gentiles*. For *Our* ſakes *altogether*: for *Our* ſakes *no doubt*, was that *Law* of *Moſes*, that Ceremoniall Law written, *Thou ſhalt not muzzle the mouth of the Oxe, &c.* And if *no doubt* in the Buſines, *Quere* (upon this) Whether *other* Lawes (reputed) *Ceremoniall*, did not point at ſomething *Morall* as well as *this*: and whether their *authority* will not beare an *Inference* of *like* nature in *parallel* caſes. And alſo whether all thoſe *Ceremonies* pointed only at *Chriſt-perſonall*, and in his *Offices*, and not *ſome* alſo at *Chriſt-myſticall*, in his body and *Members*, and their *Adminiſtrations*? (But we ſhall *forbeare* a ſuper-digreſſion, and *retreat*, as faſt as we can, to our *matter*.) 1 Cor. 9. 7, 8, 9

* He writes to thoſe at Corinth, Grecians.

And as *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles Preached* out of the *Old* Teſtament-*Scriptures*, ſo we finde ſome *Chriſtians* highly *commended* for *ſearching* into them, and *ſtudying* of them. The *Bereans* I

meane; whom the Holy *Ghoſt* commends for *Noble* ſoules, of a more *Generous* and *maſculine* ſtraine of *Chriſtianity* than thoſe of *Theſſolonica*; for that they *ſearched the Scriptures dayly*, (with the *Apoſtles* good leave) *whether the Goſpell-Doctrine that was daily preacht to them was true or not*, Acts 17. 11. and obſerve what *followes*, verſe 12. *Therefore many of them believed, &c.* ſo that their *ſearching* of the Old-Teſtament-*Scriptures* (the onely *then* in being) had a great *influence* upon their *Believing*, and made much for the *Goſpells* advantage.

Yea, it is moſt *improbable* and unagreeable to *Reaſon*, that if *Chriſt* or his *Apoſtles* had *intended* a repeale or *abrogation* of the Scriptures of the *Old Teſtament*, they would ſo farre have *enſnared* Chriſtians, as to *make* ſo much *uſe* of them in their *preachings* and writings, *without* any the leaſt *Salvo* or *Caution* in the buſineſſe. And that *all* the *Holy Scriptures*, the *whole* Word of God, that was *then* in being, ſhould be at *once* removed and *abrogated*, *without* any expreſſe Command from *God*, or any *exemplary* endeavours of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* to effect it, is a thing ſo *remote* from all *Reaſon*, that nothing but the meere *deluſion* of the Devill can ſuggeſt it: Who *knowes* the Maxime to be *true* enough, *Teſtamentum vetus novi Fundamentum & Novum veteris complementum*; The *Scriptures* of the *Old* Teſtament are the *Foundation* of the *New*, and thoſe of the *New* are the *Perfection* of the *Old*. This is the *Deſigne*, therefore, (ye may eaſily *perceive* it) Satan *would* faine *deſtroy both*, the whole building, and that he *may* doe it to *purpoſe*, hee undermines the *Foundation*. Interrupt us not here with *replying*, *that Chriſt is the Foundation* of the *New* Teſtament; for *ſo he was alſo of the Old*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. *They alſo dranke of that ſpiritual Rocke, which Rock was Chriſt*. And although the *entrance* of the *New-Covenant* makes *void* the *Old*, yet the ſtability of the *Old Scriptures* ſupport and *beare* up the *New*: for we *ought not* to have *believed* thoſe, if they had not been *conforme* and anſwerable to the *other*. And wee need not fear to ſay, that if people were *well-grounded* in the *Scriptures* of the *Old* Teſtament, they would be *leſſe extravagant* in their Notions and opinions of the *New*.

For

For *therefore yee erre* (saith Christ) *because yee know not the Scriptures.*

Object. Then, it seemes, you would subject and bring us under *all* the *Law* of *Ceremonies*, (for that also is part of the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*) and consequently deny *Christ* to be come in the *Flesh.*

Answ. 1. Not so: For our *Duty* and obedience must bee framed and regulated according to *Gods Commands* and Directions; And if the *Word* require a *perpetuall* duty, wee are bound to *performe it*: Or if but *Temporary*, we must *so* understand it. Now that the Law of *Ceremonies* was not to bee *perpetuall*, not onely the Scriptures of the *New* Testament, but divers also in the *Old*, yea the very *Ceremoniall* Law it *selfe* doth manifestly *intimate*. As the Apostle observes, *Heb.* 9. 8. (speaking of *Aarons* entring alone once a yeare into the *Holy* of Holies) *The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first Tabernacle was yet standing: which was a Sigue for the Time then present, &c.* So that the *Ceremonies* were of such a nature and constitution, as that the Holy Ghost did *signifie* and speak by *them* their owne *insufficiency*, that their duration and use was to be onely *temporary*, not everlasting and *perpetuall.* Heb. 9 8.

Answ. 2. Againe, the Holy *Ghost* in the *New* Testament gives us a *Shibboleth* of discerning between that which was to *continue*, and that which was to *vanish away.* That which *vanished*, was meere (*a*) *Shadow* and *Figure*, *Type* and *Resemblance*; had something that was *externall* and *visible*, pointing at something *else*, and not belonging as of *Necessity*, to the *Morall* acts of *Duty* and *Worship* to *God*, nor to the exercise of *Justice* and *Charity* betwixt man and *Man.* But those things that continue and are *perpetuated*, are *solid* and *substantiall*, having *something* (for the most part *evident*) in them, which *answereth* to rectified *Reason* in all men, *beside* the *Authority* of *God* commanding them: Whereas the Ceremonies (*meere* Ceremonies) had *nothing* in them, (if considered *simply*, and without reference to the *substance* which they pointed at) that might commend them to *Reason*, to be *observed* or practised, *save* onely that *God* had so a Heb. 10. 1.

appointed

appointed and ordered. For example; That ſuch and ſuch *Beaſts* might be offered in *Sacrifices*, and *none elſe*, was a *meere* Ceremony. Likewiſe, that Gods Worſhip muſt bee performed with *Altars*, *Tables*, *Candleſticks*, *Incenſe*, *&c.* With *Fire*, *Bloud*, *Fleſh*, *Bread*, *Light*, *Perfumes*, *Trumpets*, *Ephods*, *&c.* That *Sins* muſt be *confeſſed* on the head of a *Goat*, and the Goat thereupon turn'd up into the *Wildernes*, (and abundance moe) were *meere* Ceremonies. Now theſe, ſimply conſidered, had *nothing* in them, to beſpeake the *obſervation* of them from *Reaſon*; but the *onely Reaſon* for obſerving them, was becauſe *God* had *appointed* them for *Types* and *Signes*. Therefore when the *Subſtance*, (which they ſhadowed out) was *come*, there was a great deale of Reaſon why *they* ſhould *vaniſh*. But then there were *other* things, that had that *evidently* in their *Nature*, which ſuggeſted *Reaſon* why they ſhould be obſerved. As that *Law* forbidding *Marriage* between thoſe that are *neare of kin*, and with *Idolaters*. Alſo *that* which required them *not to ſuffer Idolaters to live among them*, nor to let their *Monuments* ſtand: there's *Reaſon* for it, They ſhall not dwell in thy Land, *leſt they make thee ſinne a-*
b Exod. 23. 33 *gainſt* (*b*) *me.*——*Leſt they and their gods be a ſnare unto thee*---
c Ch. 34. 15. *leſt they call thee and thou eate of their* (*c*) *Sacrifices. For ſure-*
d 1 King. 11. 2 *ly they will turne away your heart after their* (*d*) *Gods.* And ſo that *Law* concerning *Blaſphemy* (in *Stranger* or Iſraelite) to be puniſhed with *Death*; And that *enticers to Idolatry bee put to Death*, there's *Reaſon* engraven upon *them*--Becauſe *he hath ſought to thruſt thee away from the Lord*, (the greateſt *injury* in the World,) and 2. *that others may heare and feare, and doe no*
Deut. 13. 9, 10, 11. *more ſuch wickednes*, Deut. 13. 9, 10. 11. In thoſe appeare the *face* and body of *Morality*, and therefore *ſuch* as theſe are *perpetuall.*

Anſw. 3. Although the *Law* of *Ceremonies* bee *aboliſhed* as to our *practiſe*, yet it is *perpetuall* as to our *knowledge* and *learning*; for the *end* and *uſe* of Holy *Scripture* is *manifold*. *Propheſies* that are *fulfilled* are *no* longer *Propheſies*, and *yet* they are holy *Scripture* ſtill. That of our *Saviour* (to inſtance onely from the *New* Teſtament) concerning the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, was *accompliſhed* many hundred yeares agoe, *yet* is not to be ex-

ploded

ploded the *Canon*; there is that in them *still* that is much for our *Learning*. Now the *Ceremonies* were but a kind of *reall* and *hieroglyphicall Prophesyes* (of Christ to come) often acted; as the *literall* and *verball Prophesyes* might be often repeated *. And although they doe no longer *typifie*, yet they *teach* perpetually. And amongst divers others, this is *one* maine *use* of the *Ceremoniall Law* to us *Christians*, That by study thereof, and acquaintance therewith, we might be more *cleare* in our *Notions* of *Christ*, and our understanding of *Gospell-mysteries*; for the great things of the *Gospell* (we shall find) were both *preached* and *penned*, almost *wholly* in the *Dialect* of the *Ceremoniall Law*: As the most abstracted *Notionall Learning* is transmitted altogether (in a manner) by *Metaphors*: Termes and Phrases that are borrowed from things more *sensible*. But of these things more, it may be, in a more proper place.

* *Alia est Prophetia* διὰ τύπου, *sive* παραγωγίτων, *alia* διὰ λόγου, *sive* ῥημάτων. Grot. ex Chry. de Jejun. ser. 2.

Answ. 4. Let's dismisse this *Objection* with this *one other* hint, That although the *Law* of *Ceremonies* be *abolished*, yet *all* the *Ceremonies* of the *Law*, *materially* considered, are *not necessarily* to be *abandoned*, I say, though the *Ceremoniality* of them be now *removed*, yet the *matter* of them, appointed and *declared* for any *other* lawfull *use* or *end*, may be very justly and lawfully *retained*. And the Reason is this: because the *Nature* and *being* of a *Ceremony*, as a *Ceremony*, consists only in the *typicall* and relative *use* and *end* thereof. And therefore we shall find that *many* of the *Ceremonies* were not *meer Ceremonies*, but of a *mixt* quality, partly *Ceremoniall*, and partly *Morall* or *Civill*, as the thing was used. Take an instance: The *silver Trumpets* which God appointed to be made and used, had *much* of *Ceremony* in them. They were to be of *silver* (not *gold* nor *brasse*) but two in number (neither *more* nor *fewer*) and the *sonns* of *Aaron*, the *Priests* only must blow with them (*not* any *others*) And when they blew (in battell) the people should be *remembred before the Lord*, &c. they were also to be blown *over* their *sacrifices* and *offerings*, *Num.* 10. 10. All this was *Ceremony*. They had something also of *Civill* use: They were for the *calling* of the *Assembly*, and for the *marching* of the *Camp* (ver. 1.) as signals of both, according to the *Orders* there at large *given*. They might also

Num. 10. 1, 2, &c. to *ver.* 10.

have a *morall* uſe and end, as *aſſiſting* their *Battels* with *courage*, and their Triumphall *Solemnities* with cheerfulnes.

And were it agreeable to *Reaſon* or *Religion*, now, for any to *affirme*, that *becauſe* they were *Ceremoniall* and *Moſaicall*, therefore to blow with ſilver trumpets in *Chriſtian* troups or upon our dayes of *Solemnity*, is *to deny Chriſt come in the fleſh*, or that it is a *ſinne*? No our *reaſon* ſerves us in that caſe to *conſider*, That *ceremoniall* things may be retained for *morall* or civill uſes and *ends*. The *caſe* of *Tithes* is the *very ſame*, and ſundry others.

Obj. But the *Apoſtle* ſayth, *Heb.*7. 18. *there is verily a diſannulling of the Commandement, becauſe of the unprofitableneſſe thereof*, and *Chap.*8.13. that *the enterance of the new Teſtament* or Covenant *hath antiquated the former*, and *made it to vaniſh away*; and how then can the *Old* Teſtament be now in force to us *Chriſtians*?

An. Theſe Scriptures might be ſpoken to more at *large* than this place can well beare: but let it ſuffice to ſay here (to this *Objection*) That the *Apoſtle*, in thoſe and other like places, ſpeakes of the old *Covenant* it ſelfe, and *not* of the *Scriptures* that were penned *under* the adminiſtration thereof, or during the time that the ſaid *Covenant* was in force. He ſpeaks indeed of the *diſannulling* of the *Law* given, and *Covenant* made to and with the houſe of *Iſrael*, when they came out of *Egypt*: all which *Law* as to the *faederall* reference and *Covenantſhip* thereof, is *ipſo facto* removed by the *actuall* entrance and adminiſtration of the *new* Covenant (*promiſed* to the Fathers, but not *actually* exhibited, till the work of Redemption was *finiſhed*) but, as to the *matter* and *ſubſtance* thereof, the *Law* is wholly *tranſlated* * or removed into the *Goſpell*, and is ſtill to be found *entire* in the Goſpell, the *Ceremonies*, really and viſibly, in Chriſt their *ſubſtance*, the *Exactions* of the Law anſwered and abundantly *ſatisfied* by his doings and ſufferings, and the *directive* or ruling part thereof (as to *morall* duties) *tranſcribed* into the Goſpell, and become the very *precepts* and Law of *Chriſt*, and Commandements of the *new* Teſtament. And whatſoever there was, *more* than theſe, in the Law, it is *approved* by the Goſpell, as to thoſe to whom it *appertained*.

But

* The Apoſtles expreſſion, *Heb.*7.12. is cleare for this Tranſlation, or tranſpoſition of the Law into the Goſpel Μετατιθεμένης γὰρ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἐξ ἀνάγκης καὶ νόμου μετάθεσις γίνεται. For as the ſubſtance of the Prieſthood was not aboliſhed, but only tranſlated upon another Perſon, ſo the ſubſtance and matter of the Law was not deſtroyed, but only changed into another forme of adminiſtration.

But doth the Holy *Ghoſt*, there or elſewhere throughout the *new* Teſtament ſpeake a word towards the *abrogating* of the *Scriptures* of the *Old?* no, not a ſyllable towards their *diſparagement*; but every where much in *Reverence* and honour to thoſe ſacred *Oracles*; which ſtand, and *ſhall* for ever (in *defiance* of all the gates of *hell*) the pure *word* of th' eternall *God*, when all the *wilfull* oppoſers thereof ſhall be trampled *downe* to worſe than nothing. For *thy word is true from the beginning, and every one of thy righteous Judgements endureth for ever*: But *It is time for the Lord to work, for they have made voyde thy Law*, Pſal. 119. v. 126, 160.

Pſa. 119. v 89, 118, 119. 152, 160. Pſal. 19. 10.

Obj. This is *ſtrange*, that the Old *Teſtament* ſhould be *antiquated* and voyd, and yet the *writings* of the Old Teſtament *ſtand* in force!

An. Not ſtrange at all, if things be rightly conſidered: for although thoſe holy *Scriptures* were written *under* the adminiſtration of the *Old Covenant*, and in the *times* wherein it was in *force*; yet there were very few of them written *upon* the *Old Covenant*, (as their *ſubject*) nor any of them indeed *ultimately* and *determinately*; but *all* of them with ſubordination and principall *reference* to the *New* Covenant; and they had (all of them) *Chriſt*, and the promiſe of *grace* for their *maine* ſubject; * as is already proved from our *Saviours* preaching *pure* and unmixed *Goſpell* out of them *all* reſpectively (the *Law*, *Prophets* and *Pſalms*) Luk. 24. and further might be confirm'd from the words of Chriſt *Ioh.* 5. 46. *Had yee beleeved Moſes yee would have beleeved me, for he wrote of me, but if yee beleeve not his writings, how ſhall yee beleeve my words?* whereby he ſeems to teach us, that it is not *poſſible*, at leaſt very *unlikly*, that thoſe that beleeve not the *Scriptures* of the *Law*, ſhould ſincerely receive and beleeve the *Goſpell*: which is indeed *nothing elſe* but what *Moſes* and the *Prophets* foretold, as *Paul* affirmes before *Feſtus* and King *Agrippa*, *Act.* 26. 22. And therefore in *ordinary* and *extraordinary* he preached Goſpell out of the Old Teſtament, *Act.* 28. 23. with *chap.* 17. 2.

* *Acts* 10. 43. To him give all the Prophets witnes, that through his name whoſoever beleeveth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins. See alſo 1 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11. The ſpirit of Chriſt in the Prophets teſtifyed beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow.

And why ſhould it ſeem more ſtrange, that the *Old* Teſtament or Covenant ſhould be *aboliſhed*, and yet the writtings thereof

ſtand in *force*, than that ſom *Propheſies* of the *New* Teſtament * ſhould be *antiquated*, and ceaſe to be Propheſies, when yet the *records* thereof continue no leſſe holy and uſefull *Scripture* ſtill? for as the *performance* is the *conſummation* of a *Propheſy*, ſo is the *actuall* entrance of the *New Covenant* the accompliſhment and conſummarion of the *Old*: and as the *record* of the former, ſo the *writings* alſo of the latter remaine, nevertheleſſe, in full authority quality and capacity of *Holy Scripture*, as they are ordinarily ſtiled by the Holy *Ghoſt*; as *Rom.* 1.2. and chap. 7.12. 2. *Tim.* 3.15. and many other places of the New Teſtament.

* As ſome of our Saviours, *Pauls*, & thoſe of the Revelation that are already fulfilled.

And this is very cleare in *other* caſes; for in *Civill* governments, though they ſhift the *Perſons*, and *formes* of adminiſtration, (from *Monarchie*, * it may be, to a *Common wealth*, and from that to an *Oligarchie* or government of ſome few more *potent* than the reſt, or from this againe to an *Empire* or government by the *Sword*) though the *entrance* of *any* of theſe actually *removes* and abrogates that *form* which went *before*, (yet unleſſe they change to ſavage *tyranny*) the *laws*, acts, *grants* and *writings*, that were *duly* made and ratified under the *precedent* formes, are *not* abrogated by that which ſucceeds, *but* in thoſe things onely which *immediately* concerne the very *forme* that is *removed*. So is it betweene the *Old* Teſtament and the *New*, the *forme* of adminiſtration is *chang'd*, but the precepts, promiſes, counſels, directions, *&c.* which refer *not* immediately to the *firſt forme*, ſtand and *abide* in full force, to all ends and purpoſes that are not *inconſiſtent* with the *Goſpell*, unleſſe they be by ſome particular goſpell-act *expreſſely* repealed.

* The Romans ran through all theſe forms.

The *Tenant* alſo that holds of his Lord in *copy*, or at meer will and pleaſure, and in *villenage*, may afterwards poſſibly have a *grant* of the ſame poſſeſſions with ſome enlargements and additaments, in *fee*: and yet (it may be) for deſcribing and limiting the ſaid *poſſeſſion* with the privileges and appurtenances thereof, this *free charter* may refer to the Grants and deeds of the *firſt* tenure; and ſo, though the *latter* grant doe actually *null* the former *tenure*, yet the *former* writings may be ſtill in force as *ſtating* the amplitude, *extent*, & particular parts and *parcels* of the poſſeſſion ſo granted. In like manner the *writings* of the *New*

Teſtament

Testament though they *better* the *Tenure* of our *inheritance*, yet, *referring* us so often to the *writings* of the *Old Covenant*, for promises, commands, counsels, examples, rules, ends, *&c.* rather *strengthen*, than in the least measure weaken the *Authority* of those Old *Scriptures* in all *other* things.

Obj. But *Christ* saith, that *All the Prophets and the Law prophesied untill Iohn.* Mat. 11. 13. *Mat.* 11. 13.

An. And what of *that?* did they *therfore* cease to be the *word* of *God* as soon as *Iohn* appeared? and was there *no* written *word* of *God* in force from *that* time till the *Gospell* was *penned?* Why then did our *Saviours* and his *Apostles* read, preach, presse them, from time to time, after *Iohn* was com'n and gone, as *Gods* word, and holy *Scriptures?* surely had they been *then* out of date, it had been more faithfulnesse and *sincerity* to have weaned the People from them, by *preaching* and *writing* (as some *now* adayes boldly doe) *against* them.

But all the weight of this Objection lies upon the word UNTILL*, and of what *force* that word is, to bear such an *argument*, consider, from the like phrase *elsewhere*. *Sit thou at my right hand* untill *I make thine enemies thy foot stoole*, saith *God* to Christ, *Psal.* 110. 1. therefore when his enemies are brought *under*, shall he *sit* in glory *no longer?* againe, *Behold I am with you untill the end of the world*; and will he *not* therefore be with his Saints *after?* (more might be added if *need* were) The word [*untill*] therefore in *that* speech of our *Saviours* must be understood, *not* as an absolute and meere *Terminative* of the *Law* and *Prophets*, to *limit* their Authority (as holy Scriptures) untill *Iohns* time, and no longer: *but*, as in the *other* places the same phrase is used, as extensive and *continuative* of them, till *then*, and *after*; intimating onely some *alteration* of the *manner* of their influence, and authority after *Iohns* appearance, but no abolishing of their *matter*, or *forme*, as holy *Scriptures* actually in force.

* ἕως Ἰωάννου.

Againe, the *Prophets and the Law, prophesied untill Iohn*, ad-admit, then, the word [*untill*] should be meerly *limitative*, yet it can but *limit* their *Prophesying*, not their *Authority*, to the coming of *Iohn*, and about that time indeed they *did* draw neer the *end* of their *Prophesying*. The Law *fore-typed*, and the Prophets *foretold*, (and the very *things* done under the Law *prefigured*) all

things *materiall* concerning *Christ* * (and so both Law and Prophets *propheſied* of Christ) who, when he came (and he followed the *Bapiſt* very cloſe) put an *end* to al their *propheſying* of him, by *fulfilling* the *predictions* of the one and *prefigurations* of the other. And in this regard *Iohn* was *more than a Prophet*, for the *Law* and *Prophets* did, and could but ſay, The Meſſiah *ſhall* come, whereas *John* could ſay, The Meſſiah *is* come, *behold* the *Lamb* of God; and *this is he*, *Ioh.*1.29,30. and *he* was the *firſt* that *did* or *could* vary his preaching of Chriſt, from the way of *Propheſy* and prediction, to poſitive aſſertion, & *demonſtration*. Yet all this nothing hinders, but that the *Law* and the *Prophets*, the *Old* Teſtament-*Scriptures*, are *ſtill* in force, as the good *word* of *God written for our learning*, even ours, *on whom the ends of the world are come*; and a *word* that *ſtill ſpeakes* * in exhortations and *conſolations unto us*, *as unto children*, as the Apoſtle determineth, 1 *Cor.*10.11. and *Heb.*12.5.

* *Paul* preached no other things than what the Prophets and *Moſes* did ſay ſhould come. *Acts* 26.22. *Mat.*11.9.

1 *Cor.*10.11. *Heb.*12.5.

* *Ideoq; Scriptura S. veteris T. non eſt verbum mutum.*

Whoſoever thou art, therefore, that ſhalt ſtill *deny* or but *queſtion* their *Authority*, let me freely aske thee, by what *Authority* thou doſt it. Is the *Word*, or *Spirit* of Chriſt thy *warrant*? if the word, ſay, *where* it is *written*: and if the *Spirit*; how came the Holy *Ghoſt* to whiſper unto *thee*, things ſo *contrary* to his own actings, language, and diſcoveries, in and by *Chriſt*, and his *Apoſtles*? and *againſt* the records of the *New Teſtament*? no, it ſavours rankly, *rather*, of the Spirit of *Errour* and *Antichriſt*. And what ſoule that truly loves and feares *God*, or beares the leaſt regard to *Ieſus Chriſt*, can goe on to *act* ſo audacious and injurious a part *againſt* him, as *at once* to throw off, deny, or (if it be but to) *queſtion* the *greateſt* part of his written *will* and *word*, the *rule* of *faith* and *life*, and the very *foundations* indeed of all the doctrine of *Chriſtianity*? eſpecially ſeeing *God* hath declared ſo great a diſpleaſure, againſt all, without exception, that ſhall but *adde* thereto, or *diminiſh* ought therefrom. Give glory therefore to *God* O ſeduced *Soule*, and to the *word* of his grace and Truth, and with an holy diſdaine and indignation, throw back to *Satan* this and all ſuch like dangerous *deluſions*, that they may returne from whence they *came*, and be for ever buryed in the depths of *Hell* where they were firſt conceived, though even in *Hell* it ſelfe never *beleeved*, but only forg'd and framed to catch and kill poore *Soules*.

And

And now if the *Lord* hath carryed us out to ſpeake the *leaſt* as from *himſelfe* (in this digreſſion) whereby *he* ſhall pleaſe to undeceive or ſettle any poore *Chriſtian*, that hath beene ſhaken or carried away by any *wind of doctrine* (in thoſe ſtormy times) from the truth in this point: (as ſurely ſuch *impreſſions* as urged this, are ſometimes *directed* to ſuch iſſues) it will be reward and encouragement *enough* againſt all *diſadvantages*, that doe, and yet farther *may* attend theſe *imperfect* offers, and *often-interrupted* endeavours. We now returne to our *buſines*, to deliver in our thoughts of what is yet further to be *obſerved*.

CHAP. VIII.

The third *part of Satans practice againſt the holy* Scriptures, viz. *to corrupt adulterate and deprave them. The ſeverall* wayes *by which this is done, and the* danger *thereof*; purſuance of our *fourth* Obſervation.

THe deſigne of *Satan* againſt the holy *Scriptures* diſcovering it ſelfe in *foure* diſtinct *operations*, we have already branched our *Obſervation* thereof into as many different *heads* *: whereof the *two firſt* are diſpatched, viz. 1 *That he hinders their paſſage to thoſe that want them.* And 2 *oppoſeth their power with thoſe that have them.* The *two latter*, come now under conſideration, viz. 3 how he *labours to corrupt and deprave them from their proper ſenſe to ſerve his owne turne*; and 4. *ſecretly practiſeth to undermine, weaken and diminiſh their Authority and Efficacie*; and thereby to render them *unſerviceable* to the *ends* for which the *Lord* hath appointed them. The *ſecond* and the *laſt* of theſe foure particulars may *ſeeme* (to ſome) to be coincident and much what *the ſame*, but they will be found as diſtinct as *force* and *fraud*, open hoſtility and ſecret treachery. In the two *former* his *ſubtilty* appeares more *violent*, and in the *latter* two, his *malice*, more *fraudulent*: but in them *all*, his miſchievous device againſt the *Truth* and *Church* of *Chriſt* is very manifeſt and *evident*.

If here the Reader pleaſe to review the beginning of the ſeventh chap. he ſhall ſuddenly recover the method, and receive the leſſe interruption by the large digreſſion.

* *Ch. 6. pag. 41.*

I would

I would willingly have wrapt up the *two laſt*, and diſmiſſ'd them, together; but it wil not be: for although they agree *in tertio*, in ſerving the devills turne againſt the *Truth*, yet they are very diſtinct and oppoſit in their natures and operations. For, even as in the heate of *battell*, when in purſuit of ſome advantage the enemies *Canon* is ſurprized and poſſeſſed, ſuch *Pieces* as may be ready *traverſd* upon their late *owners*, are carefully *guarded* in a condition for preſent *ſervice*: whereas if there be any that they cannot bring *off*, or make uſe of upon the *place*, they preſently diſmount, *accloy*, or ſo diſfurniſh them that if they doe no *good*, they ſhall not readily be uſed to doe any *hurt*; In like manner doth *Satan* by the *Scriptures* of *Truth*: where he ſees he can ſufficiently *corrupt* their Purity (wreſt and pervert them to his *owne* ends) there he ſtrictly *preſerves* their higheſt *Authority* (and indeed in ſuch a *caſe* it is his *Intereſt* to doe ſoe, for they are become his *Inſtruments*, and ſerve his *turne*) but where he *cannot* ſo falſifie and *deprave* them, he failes not of *endeavours* to obſtruct and *weaken* them, and to make them (as much as *may* be) of no force *againſt* him.

And yet theſe practiſes, of *traverſing* and *cloying* the *Canon* of the *Scriptures*, (*wreſting* and *obſtructing* or weakning the Word) how contrary ſoever they *ſeeme* in their externall motions, (as *wheels* in a *clock* that move ſeverall wayes) nevertheleſſe exactly *anſwer* each to other, and are *fitted* together to carry on the *Intereſt* of *Satan*, *as* powerfuly, and *more* dangerouſly, than *any* of thoſe more *open* oppoſitions before mentioned. *For* as *ſubtile* and ambitious Spirits, who being *encouraged* by ſome great *advantages* would practiſe to *enſlave* a free *Nation*, that they may make themſelvs *abſolute*; though they cannot *aboliſh* the *Laws* of common liberty, nor keepe them from the *Peoples* knowledge, yet as effectually (and more eaſily) compaſſe their *Deſignes*, if they can but get the *Law* into their owne *hands*, and enable themſelves with *Power* to enterpret them as they think good, or ſet up any *other* petended *Authority* to check and *overtop them**: for by this meanes they can ſtrengthen their deſignes with the pretended *Authority* of *Law* where they can with any colour *wreſt* the *Law* to ſerve their *purpoſe*; and where

* Thus it was in ſome degree when the Law was wreſted to ſet up Prerogative, & Proclamations and Acts of Councel table had more Authority put upon them than the unqueſtionable Acts of Parliament; and thus it ever was, and is, when the ſword carves out Law, and might determines right.

where it will not be *Inſtrumentall* to their *ends*, they can eaſily *weaken* and beare it downe with their *counter-authority*, which ſhall *oppreſſe* or give *relief*, when the *Law* ſhall be *diſabled*. Even the *Devill* (that great *uſurper* upon the Royalties of *God* and the Rights of his *People*,) though he cannot prevaile to *abrogate* or aboliſh the *being* of holy *Scriptures*, nor yet *altogether* keep them from the *knowledge* of men, may nevertheleſſe *carry on* his great *plot* againſt the truth of *Chriſt* with much facility and expedition, if, under a *pretence* of retaining and *owning* the *Scriptures*, he can but obtaine licenſe to *interpret* them, or can *ſubject* their *Authority* to any thing *beſide* themſelves whatſoever. For by this meanes he *corrupts* the *Scriptures* to ſpeake in many caſes *for* him, and where he cannot *ſo* pervert them, he ſo cunningly *checks* and *ſlights* their Authority over the *conſciences* of men, that they may not to any purpoſe *oppoſe* him, or prevaile much *againſt* him.

This *corrupting* of the *word* of *God* is no upſtart deviee or new-found ſtratagem, but as *old* as errour or *ſinne* it ſelfe in the world. To goe up no *higher*, we may heare holy *Paul deſcribing* it, and *complaining* ſadly of it, 2 *Cor.*2.17. and glancing againe at them *chap.*4.2. that walk in *craftines*, and handle the word of *God deceitfully* *. From both places it appeares, that there were many (then) *corrupters of the word of God*, that dealt *deceitfully* therewith, adulterating and ſophiſticating it with *baſe* and *foraine* mixtures, for their owne *ends*, as *Hucksters* do by their commodities, or *Vintners* by their wines, as the *word* there* imports: for *wee are not as many which corrupt the word of God, &c.* It implyes *two* things*. 1 A deceitfull *corrupting*, falſifying or depraving of the *Word* of God, and 2 A *reaching* at ſome *advantages* thereby. And it is performed *Three* wayes *chiefly*:

1. By *adding* to
2. By *diminiſhing* of } its proper *ſenſe*.
3. By *diſguiſing* it from

1. By *adding* to it, as *they*, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 2. who corrupted and wreſted the words of *Chriſt* concerning the *certaintie* of his ſecond comming, to ſome certaine *time* of his comming. *As if the day of Chriſt was at hand.* Which might ſeem to many an

* 2 Cor. 4. 2. δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον, &c.

* 2 Cor. 2. 17. καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον. Cauponantes, Græc. * Adulteratione verbi, & ſtudium lucri.

1. *Addendo.*
2. *Minuendo.*
3. *Mutando.*

immateriall point, an *errour* very *veniall*, and of no great importance, or ill *influence* upon the *Soule*. Let them thinke the day of *Chriſt* is at hand, and ſpare not (might ſome ſay) it will make them ſo much the *more* watchfull, and *holy*, in expectation of that *day*, &c. But the *Apoſtle* ſaw the great danger thereof in *many* regards (although indeed twas a *ſnare* very cunningly laid, as *might* here be ſhewed, but *muſt* not) and therfore ſets himſelf *mightily* againſt it, to reſiſt and over-throw it. We purpoſely forbeare to mention here the large *additions* that *Satan* (by his inſtruments) hath made of many *Apocryphall* books, to the holy *Canon*, both of the *Old* and *New* *Teſtament; whereof *ſome* have heretofore been forcibly and unworthily thruſt into our *Bibles* to no other intent (on *his* part) but to diſparage and *diſgrace* the true *Scriptures*; wherunto many of thoſe Apocryphall *Supplements* and obſcure diſcourſes are no more *like* than the *Head* and *feet* of *Nebuchadnezars* Dreame; the head, *ſilver* and *gold*, uſefull and precious, the feet *Iron* & *Clay*, courſe ſtuffe, and *incoherent*: Their *ſtile* ſo *inſipid*, and ſo farre beneath the *Majeſty* of the *Scriptures*, and the *matter* alſo ſo *impertinent*, *unprofitable*, *improbable*, *ridiculous*, and (in many things) *impoſſible*, that they ſhew to the *Scriptures*, as a *leane-to* of *turfe* under a ſtately *palace* of poliſht *marble*. Yet the *Devill* hath abuſed many poore ignorant creatures therewith under the pretence of Scripture, &c. but we are *obſerving* here, how he *corrupts* the word by *adding* to the *ſenſe thereof*.

Liber Hermetis, &c. Vid. Sixt. Senen. l. 8. B. s.

2. By *diminiſhing* and *detracting from the ſenſe* and *ſubſtance* (for we wave this practice alſo upon the *letter*, or ſome particular *parts* thereof) when the *Devill* immediately, or by his *Inſtruments*, makes the *word* ſpeake *leſſe* than it *meaneth*. Thus he jugled (to little purpoſe) with *Wiſedome* it ſelfe, *Mat.* 4. 6. *If thou be the Sonne of God, caſt thy ſelfe downe, for it is written he ſhall give his Angels charge concerning thee*, &c. Where he abuſeth a paſſage in the *Pſalmes*, and makes it ſpeake his *owne* ſenſe, and to his *owne* ends, by *diminiſhing* from the *true* ſenſe (and *letter* too) that grand and materiall *condition* without *which* it was no longer the *word* of *God*, but a deluſion of the *Devill*, *viz* to keep thee *in all thy wayes*.

Pſal. 91. 11.

*Sophiſma mutilationis, ſive paralogiſtica omiſſio.

3 He alſo corrupts the *word* by *changing* and *diſguiſing* it from its proper ſenſe. By *adding* he makes the Scripture ſpeake *more* than truth; By *diminiſhing*, *leſſe* than truth; but by this *diſguiſing*, *nothing* at all of *truth*: but his *owne mind* in *Gods words*, and falſehood in the *phraſe* of truth *. As when (for example) that ſaying of the *Apoſtle*, *All things are lawfull for me**, is wreſted, as it hath been by *ſome*, to prove that *nothing is unlawfull to a beleever*, be it never ſo *ſinfull*, whereas he ſpeakes there of *meats*, of which all were not lawfull under the *Law*, but are now under the *Goſpell*. Or, againe, *The elements ſhall melt with fervent heat (a)*: that is, ſay *ſome* of our 'bove-ordinance-men, the outward elements of *bread* and *wine* in the *Sacrament* of the Supper, and all other externall *formes* ſhall melt, vaniſh away, and be *removed* out of the *Church*, &c.

* There was a manifeſt *Depravation*, alſo, of that Scripture which he quoted to our Saviour, Mat. 4.6. ſome ſtate the fallacy in this only.

* 1 Cor. 6.12. & 10.23.

a 2 Pet. 3.10.

Numberleſs are the *Scriptures* that are thus groſly and moſt abſurdly (even to *madneſſe*) abuſed and *wreſted* to convey and teach all manner of *Impoſtures* and deluſions. Nor was there ever any *Hereſy* ſo *deviliſh* or *practice* ſo prophane and *damnable*, but ſomething or other hath been pretended from *Scripture* to countenance and *authoriſe* it. Some particular places there be which ſeverall *ſects* have marvailouſly improved, and as it were *appropriated* to themſelves reſpectively. The *Arrians* laid their *foundation* upon *Prov.* 8.22. and made very much alſo of this, *My father is greater than I (b)*. The *Manichees* of this, *He was found in the forme of a ſervant (c)*. *Montanus*, yea the very *Turks* * and *Mahumetans* of this, *I will ſend you another Comforter (d)*. The *Papiſts* of this, *Thou art Peter (e)*, *and upon this Rock will I build my Church*. The *Familiſts* of this, *The kingdome of God is within you (f)*, yea the very *Antiſcripturiſts* ſtick not to urge this Scripture, *Not of the letter, but of the Spirit (g)*, and *They ſhall be all taught of God (h)*. &c. The *Covetous* alſo hath at his tongues end, *If any provide not for his owne, he hath denyed the faith, and is worſe than an infidell (i)*, and the *voluptuous* and Intemperate are as ready againe for *their* turne, *It is good for a man to eate and drinke and enioy the good of all his labour, for it is his portion (k)*, or els, *That which goeth into the belly defileth not the man (l)*, And *neither doe I condemn thee (m)*, &c. Thus the

b Joh. 14.22.
c Phil. 2.7,8.
d Joh. 14.16.
* And that, ſay they, is *Mahomet*.
e Mat. 16.18.
f Luk. 17.21.
g 2 Cor. 3.6.
h 1 Joh. 6.45.
i 1 Tim. 5.8.
k Eccl. 5.18.
l Mat. 15.11.17.
m Joh. 8.11.

Scriptures of *Truth* are abuſed, to patronize and credit Opinions and practiſes moſt *oppoſit* to Truth, holynes and *God* himſelf. *So*, poyſonous *weeds* are bred and ſpred in corrupt ſoyles, by the very *waters* of life, and ſweet influences of *Heaven*. And the moſt *prodigious* monſters*; that ever were engendred by the *Devill* upon wicked *Fancies*, are fatherd upon *God*, and *nurſed* up with the *milk* of his *word*: than which, *what* diſhonour or abuſe can be imagined *more* horrid or *abominable*?

* *Vid.* Epiph. Lib. 1. Tom. 2. contra Gnoſticos. *Vbi nefanda plurima, nec non cogitatu horrenda præſatus de pluſquam Diabolicis Sectæ iſtius inquinamentis.* Non erubuſcunt, *inquit*, dicere ipſum Sanctum noſtrum I. Chriſtum hæc ipſis revelaſſe, Et dicunt quòd etiam hoc eſt quòd dictum eſt in Evangelio, &c.

There is alſo a *fourth* way of *wreſting* holy *Scriptures*; and that is, when it is urged in its *true* literall *ſenſe*, but *falſly applyed*, to objects, ends and purpoſes, whereunto ſuch Scriptures belong not (*o*). As when ſome full *Goſpell* promiſe of *Juſtification* and *Salvation*, is tendred *without* caution to impudent and *obſtinat* ſinners, to *encourage* them in their evill wayes. Or when ſome *Threatning* is urged to *diſcourage* from that which is *good* &c. And this is a very pernicions practice of *Satan* too, but *more* prejudiciall to the *Soules* of men than to the *Truth* of God, or *ſenſe* of the *Scriptures*.

o *Corrumpitur Dei doctrina indirecte, cum retenta puritate flectitur tamen huc & illuc in hominum gratiam, & indignis lenocinijs deformatur ad aucupandum favorem.* Cal. in 2 Cor. 2

Now this practice of *corrupting* and adulterating the word, (by all the ways laſt mentioned) is ſo much the *more* carefully to be *obſerved* and *avoyded*, by how much the more *dangerous* it is (beyond the *reſt*) in the *nature* and *effects* thereof. The *danger* whereof appeares in theſe *Foure* particulars.

Firſt, for that hereby the *Authority* of the *Scriptures*, (the principall *meanes* of our *Salvation*) is made the grand *Inſtrument* of carrying on the Devills *intereſt*, and the ſoules *deſtruction**. There be *two* moſt eminent and eſſentiall *properties* of holy *Scripture*: They are of perfect *Purity*, and higheſt *Authority*. Now Satan by falſifying their *ſenſe* corrupts their *Purity*, and ſo makes them utter his *owne* ſenſe with their *divine* Authority; thereby urging *Damnation* alſo upon the ſoule under the notion of *Duty**; wherein he far outgoes all the *forcible* practices before mentioned. For where he debars the Scriptures from

* There is by this meanes death in the pot, and poyſon in our bread of life. **In verbis vitæ lucra mortis negotiantur.*

from a people, as they cannot be *helpfull* to their Soules, becauſe they *have* them *not*, ſo neither can they be *hurtfull*, for the *ſame* Reaſon. And where he ſtirrs up the greateſt *Oppoſition* againſt the word, he goes out upon *ſome* diſadvantages; for though his *malice* be *invincible*, yet his *power* is *limited*, and cannot exceed *Gods* appointment*. He can *forme no weapon againſt* the Truth, but what *breaks* it ſelfe *upon* Truth, with the meer *encounter*; as *glaſſe* with *Adamant*, or the boyſtrous *waves* upon the hard *Rocks*. For if *Reaſon*, it is moſt *inevident*: and if *Authority*, and Teſtimony of prophane Authors, it is moſt *improbable*, and *worſe* than *uncertaine*: and there is *enough* to be produced from *Scripture* to ſilence *both* (as the Noble *Du Pleſſie* * ſweetly demonſtrates.) Or if *paſſion, rage, malice*, (his more *ordinary* weapons,) they are *brute* things, and for the moſt part *ineffectuall*. By theſe indeed he hath ſometimes (as God hath lengthend and *veer'd* out his chaine) made great havock of the *Church*, but prevayl'd little or nothing againſt *Truth*. But the greateſt *executions* that ever he did upon *Truth*, hath beene by *wreſting* and corrupting *Scripture*. Witneſſe the *Papacie*, &c. And the *Devill* indeed is never ſo dangerous as when he appeares like an *Angell of light*, and ſpeakes the language of the Holy *Ghoſt*. In his *proper* ſhape he may *fright* us, but in theſe *diſguiſes* he moſt of all *hurts* us; for then he does his *work* in the name of *God*, and in the Authority of his *word*, to the *Deſtruction* of many a poore Soule. So, the *Apoſtle*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. ſpeaking of the Scriptures, the Epiſtles of *Paul* eſpecially, *wherein* (ſaith he) *are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable*, (of unſetled judgements) *wreſt* or *torture*, urge and force, (*to get that out* of them which was never *in* them) *as they do alſo by the other Scriptures to their own* DESTRUCTION. *Deſtruction*, then, is the *end*, wherunto this *racking* and wreſting the *Scriptures* leads, as a high way, & ready *means*. And not onely thoſe that are *maliciouſly* bent againſt the Truth thus *deſtroy* themſelves, but thoſe alſo that are *unlearned* and *unſtable*. Unlearned, that never *learn'd* the Doctrine of the *Goſpell throughly*, but by halfes and *ſnatches*: chaſing ſome *particular* points, and *ſingle* Notions * (which ought *not* to be diſſever'd from

* Therefore we ſay. *Diaboli voluntas ſemper iniqua, at poteſtas ejus nunquam injuſta.*

* *De veritate Relig. Chriſti.*

2 Pet. 3. 16. ἐν αἷς ἐστι δυσνόητά τινα ἃ οἱ ἀμαθεῖς καὶ ἀστήρικτοι στρεβλοῦσιν ὡς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτῶν ἀπώλειαν.

* Hæretici Scripturam in particulas diſcerpunt, & in ſuam ſententiã detorquent. Camero. de Controv. Judic.

from the maine *body* of *Truth*) ſo *farre*, that they loſe *themſelves*, and the *Truth* too, whereof they pretend themſelves *Seekers*. Juſt as when ſome *clumſy* and unskilfull *hand* boldly takes a well tuned *Lute*, and ſtriving to make all harmony from *one* ſtring, ſnaps it preſently *aſunder*, or *ſtraines* it to a *diſcord* with all the reſt. And not the *unlearned* only, but the *unſtable* alſo, though *better* learned, that are not ſetled *rooted* and confirmed *in the faith*, *as they have been taught** ; theſe being *more buſy*, through the *conceit* they have of their owne *knowledge*, are very *apt* to *wreſt* the Scriptures, to their owne *deſtruction*. Moſt pertinently therefore the *Apoſtle*, in the very next words, ſubjoynes this caution, *Yee therefore, beloved, ſeeing yee know theſe things before, beware leſt yee alſo being led away through the errour of the wicked, fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſſe**. Your *Deſtruction* may be occaſioned and brought on, as well by *forcing* and *ſtraining* the Scriptures, as by *oppoſing* the Goſpell with profeſſed *enmity*. How exceeding *carefull* (then) are *we* concernd to be, leſt *want* of learning, *ſelfconceit*, or *unſtedfaſtneſſe*, betray us to *privat Interpretations* of the Scriptures, and to ſuch a *ſenſe* as is remote from the *Common ſenſe* of godly-learned and judicious *Chriſtians*?

* Col. 2. 7.

* 2 Pet. 3. 17.

Secondly, this practice is likewiſe very *dangerous* in regard of this: That corrupt *Nature*, being *prone* to all *errour* in beleefe and practice, greedily *applyes* to any *colour* of Authority (eſpecially of *Scripture*) to *warrant* or countenance that which it is ſo (naturally) *addicted* to. Carnall hearts are ever ready to inferr *falſhood* from *truth*, and to draw *pernicious* conſequences from the moſt *ſincere* diſcoveries, which *Grace* improves to ſweet and *holy* concluſions. *The time is ſhort*: therefore ſaith grace, *let us uſe the world as though we uſed it not*. But to morrow we ſhall die: therefore *lets eate and drink*, ſay the children of *corruption*. So, from the ſame flowers the *Bee* drawes *hony*, and the *ſpider*, *poyſon*. Yea *Benhadads* men watcht not more diligently the mouth of *Ahab*, for a word to ſecure their Maſters *life*, than many (in reading, hearing, diſcourſing) lye upon the *catch** for *Scripture* expreſſions, which they may colourably *corrupt* to plead their cauſe, and *juſtifie* their ungodly *courſes*. And the

* *Si vero aliqua ſententia ad ſimilitudinẽ concupiſcentiæ ipſorum formari poterit, non ut habet verbum, ſed velut habet mens ipſorũ decepta, hanc ad cupiditatem ſuam tranſmutant, & hoc eſt, inquiunt, quod dixit dominus, &c.* Epiphan.

Devill

Devill cannot be more ready to *adminiſter* ſuch *poyſons*(wrapt up in the *leafe* of holy Scriptures) than *ſome* are to receive and *ſwallow* them, whereof *all* ages afford *ſufficient* proofs, and *ours* more than *many*. For, however the *Prophets* of *old* complain'd of hard and *heavy work*, that their labors were very inſuccesfull, *Who hath beleeved our report**? *&c. I have labour'd in vaine, I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought*, &c. ſaith that fifth Evangeliſt, *Eſay*, a moſt ſpirituall preacher, and unparallel'd. *Ieremie* alſo an affectionat and *winning* Prophet, is ſo ſenſible of it, that a man would thinke him ſometimes halfe *diſtracted**. And the very *Apoſtles*, with all their extraordinary *gifts**, and miraculous accompliſhments (which the *Lord* thought but *little* enough, to give Goſpell-*truth* a paſſage into the *world*) found it worke enough to *get* and *keep* Soules for *Chriſt*: They were faine to *labour*, and *ſtrive*, travell in *birth*, and take *pains* for them, and *enough* to doe they had, *who is ſufficient for theſe things**? Yea, *Chriſt* the *truth* himſelfe complaines (being even in this alſo *made conformable to his brethren*) *that they received him not*, nor the *word* he preacht unto them*; and his ableſt *champions*, from time to time, that in the *ſervice* of the *Goſpel* they had difficulties enough to conflict with, and got *ground* of the Devill as were but by *nicks*, *here a little and there a little*, &c. Yet the *teachers* of *falſe* and pernicious *doctrines*, in the abuſed language of holy *Scriptures*, (under the Name of *New light* and *refined* Goſpell) can *ſayle* always *before* the *wind*, and in *ſmooth* water, and finde ſuch *eaſy* worke, that even women and *children* think themſelves ſufficient, without any ſuch *extraordinaryes* as the Apoſtles *had* to *doe* more than they *did*, in winning carnall and licentious ſpirits to *their* Goſpell.

* Iſa. 53. 1. & 49. 4.

* Jer. 20. 7, 8, 10, 14.

* *Miſſilia Chriſti.*

* 2 Cor. 2. 16.

* Joh. 5. 43.

And *this* the *Devill* knowes well *enough*, who therefore by his *Inſtruments* demands but free *liberty* to preach and publiſh ſuch corrupt *opinions*; for ſay they, *Truth*(ſo they call their vileſt errors) *would prevaile of it ſelfe, if it might have but free paſſage, and we deſire not ſay they, to ingage the power of the Magiſtrate to compell any to come in to us, or receive our doctrine*, &c——— Truly friends yee *need not*: For if *all power* (military and civill) were more *againſt* you than it now ſeemes to *countenance* and

encourage

encourage you, yet such *doctrines* as *gratify* corrupt *Nature* would find *entertainment* enough in the *world*, especially being delivered in the Name of *God* and the pretended *authority* of his holy *Word*. (Witnesse the *Arrian* Heresy, which though snib'd by *Constantine* at the first comming up, yet very suddenly grew to a *monstrous* bulke, and spred it selfe as wide as *Nebuchadnezars* Tree*, to the very *ends* of the Earth*.) It is *beyond* the art & industry of *man* (however assisted) to *cleare* the ground of such *weeds*, they are so *naturall* to the soyle; no wonder then if they *increase* and *multiply* when with so much care they are *sow'n* and set, *planted* and watered. It is for *good seed* that the poore *husbandman* is faine to turne his fallowes over and over, (and well apayd he is, if with many a painfull *dayes* worke he can but get it well into *ground*:) and, after many months patience, reaps* some *reasonable* increase. But the *enemy* with his *tares* is at *no* such *care* nor *pains*; *his* businesse requires neither *plow* nor *harrowes*; let *him* have but *opportunity* and his *work* is *easy* and successes *great* and suddaine: *One* night *tares* may spoyle a whole *field* of *wheat*. *Evill* is *easy**; learned with *little* teaching; and *plausible* infusions *need* no great *perswasions*. The *tyde* would *flow* although the *wind* were *contrary**. What needs the *Rod*, to drive boyes *from* their bookes, or to *enforce* them to *play*? Twere *strange*, if men should be *compel'd* to doe what they *list*: or by *power* enforced to *that*, from which *nothing*, without the *Power* of *God*, can *restraine* them. And yet somtimes the *wind* drives *on* the *Tyde* and streame with a *violence* that is not *visible* indeed, yet very *sensible*. There be also *many* formes of *compulsion*; and *other* Powers *besides* and *above* the Magistrates. Nor is there any *compulsion* more forcible than the politick *disposall* of *countenance* and *disfavour*, *privileges* and *pressures*. But *this* we say (to *Seducers*) were *all* these *against* you, ye have yet the *advantage*; for corrupt *Nature* is *for* you, in *every one* ye deale with. (That there is such a *symmetrie* and agreement betwixt Naturall *corruption* and the *principles* of your infusions, is apparent from this; that those that come over *to* you, if they have been of corrupt ways before, are *seldome* known to *reforme* them: and if they have been *strict* and conscientious in their walkings

* Dan. 4. 11.

* *Fuit nempe hujus impietatis tam incredibilis successus, ut omnes fere Romani Imperii Ecclesias hæc lues pervaserit. Ita placuit hic error orbi*, &c. Carion. Chr ex Nicep. & Cassiodor.

* Jam. 5. 7.

* *Facilis descensus, & σύντομος ἡ πονηρία*, It is quick work.

* *Naturã expellas furca licet usq; recurret.*

walkings afore times, for the most part they grow *remisse*, and take more liberty to *sinne*; when once they have *throughly* drawne in your Principles and improvements, and been made acquainted with the *depths* and secrets of your *Opinions*.) And that this is no small advantage for the spreading of such doctrines, is evident from all *experience* in things morall and *practicall*. We finde it in many places, some sorry *fellow* that is ring leader of the Alehouses crue (without Scripture, learning, parts, or any thing els but much boldnes and a little wicked wit) hath done more to *keepe up* sinne and vanity in the place where he lives, than *Magistrate* and *Minister* both (*when* they joyned in such a work) could doe to beat it *downe*; and whats the Reason? but only that such a one has the *advantage* of mens *corruptions*, and their very *nature* to worke upon; he is but the *bellows* to their *Fire*, and works but upon that which was there *before*, &c. So is it with *seducing* Teachers, and therefore a *wonder* it is they prevayle *no more*: but that indeed this their *advantage* hath also its *disadvantage* (so *God* in mercy hath ordered) for by this full complyance with corrupt Nature, there are those *drawn in* to their Opinions and wayes, who (for their former and present course of life) serve as *Sea-marks* upon *rocks* to their more ingenuous neighbours, *discouraging* their approches to such a *Profession*, as wherein people of that *sort* so readily *ingage*.

And accordingly the Apostle saith, *after their own lusts they shall heap to themselves teachers*, (2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.) *having itching eares*, &c. They choose and affect Teachers according as they sort with their corruptions and lust.

Thirdly, this practice (of adulterating the Word) is the more *dangerous*, because it's fitted to *prevayle* with the *best* of men, and to seduce the very *people* of *God*; those that are *sincere* and sound-hearted *Christians* in the *maine*. Of these, there be many that would *abhorre* and disdaine some things, if propounded under the Notion of *Sin*, or a *Temptation* of the Devill, which yet, being urg'd from *Scripture*, (as Gospell-*privileges*, or *duties*) they conscientiously *comply* with, and *yield* obedience to. And therefore when *Satan* would assault our Blessed *Saviour*, in whom was *no Sinne* or infirmity to give the least *advantage* or *encouragement* to his undertaking, whatever *stratagem* he made use of, would be sure not to omit this, the *wresting* of holy *Scripture*. *If thou be the Sonne of God cast thy selfe downe, for*

it is written, &c*. If any could have taken place, *this*, he was sure, would prevaile. And *what* (thinke we?) could ever have *prevaild* with many in our times, that were reputed truly *Godly* & very faithfull Christians, to *forsake* the publique *Ordinances*, despise the *Ministry*, slight the very *Scriptures*, and abandon or throw off all Christian-*duties**, (all which, *before*, they dearly *loed* and *frequented*) if they had not been required to all this, as from *God*, and *urged* with the *Authority* of his *Word*, by those *deceitfull workers*; who, by cunning *slights*, and *cogging** of Scriptures, (as gamesters, the *Dice*) lye upon the *catch*, to snap those that are *unsetled* in their judgements, or of *Scrup'led* Consciences, and, so, *apt* to be *carryed about with every winde of Doctrine*.

Fourthly, and lastly, it is very *dangerous* in regard that *errour so received* (as from God, and in the authoritie of his word) is for the most part tenaciously *held*, boldly *maintain'd*, *rarely* also (and if ever at all, very *difficultly*) renounced and *retracted*. We perceive not that the *Apostles* had half so much to doe to *plant* the Gospell *where Christ was not yet named*, as to *reduce* those to the truth that were once seduced, and led away with *errour*. And surely the *Jewes* at this day are a wofull *mirrour* wherein to see this truth *exampled*. For what is *it* that hath *hindred* that Nation (for so many hundred yeares) from receiving the Lord *Jesus Christ* and the *Gospell* of his grace, but the *corrupt sense* which from age to age they have retained of the *Scriptures*, Law and Prophets*? *Had ye beleeved Moses* (*saith* the Lord) *ye would have beleeved me* † ——— and *Therefore ye erre because ye know not the Scriptures**. And yet they both *knew* the *Scriptures* and *beleeved Moses*, and still *doe*: but they fram'd to themselves, and to this day *retaine*, a most *carnall* and corrupt *understanding* of both. The Apostle therefore speaking of *seducers* & the *Seduced*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 6. enters this as part of their Character. *These*, that they are *ever learning, and yet never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth*. And of seducers, that they are *Reprobate concerning the faith*, and of *both*, (chap. 4. 3.) that they will *not endure sound Doctrine, but turne away their ears from the Truth, and give eare to fables*. And the maine *reason* why they are

* *Ex ipsâ illa quâ superatus est, fide, occasionem sumit.* Scult.

* *Magno aliorũ, maximo suo malo.*

Eph. 4. 14. κυβεία.

Facilis descensus Averni, Sed revocare gradum, superasq; evadere ad auras, Hoc opus, hic labor est.

* Acts 13. 27. *Because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.*

† John 5. 46.

* Mar. 12. 24.

are so difficultly reclamed (besides the secret Judgement of *God* giving them *up* to strange *delusions*, to beleeve lies, and giving them *over* to the power of *Satan*) seemes to be *this*; Because whilst they are so deluded, *Nature* is *pleased*, and *Conscience* not *displeased*. Nature is well contented because *Corruption* is *gratified*, and *lust* indulged, with *liberty* to please a mans owne *fancie* in the *forming* both of *beliefe* and *practice*, which is spirituall lust and the soules adultery, *Ezek.* 16*. (whereunto that expression of the *Apostle* agreeth, 2 *Tim* 4.3.&c.) And *Conscience* is not displeased, but very well *satisfied* with the Authority of *Scripture made* and *corrupted* (by those deceitfull workers) to speake in *justification* (yea and strict *injunction* too) of such their *errours*. And therefore unlesse the *Lord* be very mercifull to them, and with a strong hand bring them out of this spirituall *Sodom* and *Egypt*, that they be not consumed in the *Iniquity* thereof, (and this he will certainly doe by his *owne*, first or last) those that are once seduced from the *substantials* of the Gospell, and *principles* of true Religion, are *sel dome* onever *recovered*, or renewd againe to Repentance, *Heb.* 6.4,6.

* Psal. 106.39.
2 Tim. 4.3.
κνηθόμενοι τὴν ἀκοήν.

Heb. 6.

Thus we see, that *wresting* and *misinterpreting* of Scripture, (be it but of *unskilfulnesse*, and *unsetlednesse* of Judgement) is *exceeding* dangerous; which ought to *check* and stop their *rashnesse*, who usurpe an unlimited freedome to make the *mouth* of *God* to *speake* the fancies and *delusions* of their *owne hearts*, and to *impose* the Scriptures with privat interpretations. This danger also bespeaks our *warinesse*, that we swallow not greedily such new and *untryed* interpretations as many as are *now* a dayes *devised*, without ground from the *text*, or agreement with the *scope* of the holy *Ghost*. And *moves*, for earnest *prayer* to the Lord, that he would *open our understandings*, *that we may rightly understand the Scriptures*; and so take away the *vayle* from off our *hearts**, that we al with *open face* may *behold as in a glasse*, *the Glory of the Lord*, and *be changed into the same Image by the spirit of the Lord*.

* 2 Cor. 3. 16, 18,

CHAP. IX.

The fourth *and laſt part of* Satans *practice againſt the* Scriptures, *viz. to undermine, enervate and weaken them, and to make them of none effect. The ſeverall wayes whereby it is done, with the danger thereof diſcovered. (In concluſion of this maine Obſervation concerning the holy* Scriptures.)

THe *fourth* and laſt *branch* of our *Obſervation* concerning the *Scriptures*, againſt which the *practices* of *Satan* are moſt *obſervable* both for their *quality* and *variety*, as alſo for the grand *concernment* thereof; (and *that* occaſioneth our *ſtay* the *longer* thereon) is *this*. That, by his *Inſtruments*, he doth alſo *ſecretly practiſe to undermine, impaire and diminiſh their Authority and efficacie*, upon the Judgment, Conſciences & ways of men. His *open oppoſing* of their Authority was ſpoken to before*, (under the *Second* branch) but this refers only to *ſubtilty*, and more *ſecret* practice. If *there* he *clipt* the coyne, *heere* he *waſheth* it: a practice the *more dangerous* becauſe the *leſſe diſcernable*.

* Page 43.

This was that which our *Saviour* charg'd the *Phariſees* with, *Mar.*7. 13. That they *made the word of God of none effect*. And this is done either *Directly* or *Indirectly*. And *Directly*, againe, *In whole* or *In part*.

*Their *Mercabah* or *Theology* was no better. As for their *Cabal Breſchith*, it is but their *Philoſophy*, and containes many pretty notions, (ſay thoſe that have been ſtudious therof,) eſpecially their 50 *ports of light, or underſtanding*. *Reuchlin.* de Cab. & *Alſt.* de Phyſ. Hebr.

In the *whole*, Foure wayes, *Firſt, by reſolving the whole written Word into Allegories* and myſteries: as if little or nothing in the Scriptures were to be underſtood according to the *literall* ſenſe. How notoriouſly the Jewiſh *Cabaliſts* ran out in theſe *wilde* and *fabulous* interpretations of Scripture, is very well known to thoſe who have inquired into *their* learning; who pretending a certaine ſecret, *myſticall* and more ſpirituall *meaning* of the *Law*, never committed to writing, but delivered to *Moſes* in the *Mount*, and by him to the *Seventie* ſucceſſively, by word of mouth, at length wrought up their ſubtile *Notions* and elevations, partly, to a kind of *Magick* or *Theurgie**, (working

ing by certaine myſticall *numbers, figures* and *Names* of *God, Angels, Devils*, &c.) and in the *reſt*, to meere *dotage* and worſe than old wives *fables**. Unto which kind of Divinity (falſely ſo called) thoſe many expreſſions in the *Epiſtles* of the New *Teſtament* ſeeme to refer, which ſtrongly dehort from giving heed to *Fables*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 4. and 1 *Tim.* 4. 7. *Refuſe prophane and old wives fables*; & *Tit.* 1. 14. *Not giving heed to* JEWIH *fables*, and Commandments of men that turne from the faith. There were it ſeemes that preachd ſuch fabulous doctrine under the notion of ſpirituall *myſteries*. *Paul* would not have *Timothy* nor *Titus* to do ſo. *Peter*, alſo, gave no ſuch example, 2 *Pet.* 1. 16. *for we have not followed cunningly deviſed Fables*, &c. Yet ſuch doctrine is very pleaſing to itching eares and carnall hearts, 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. *The time will come when they will not endure ſound Doctrine, but after their owne luſts ſhall they heap to themſelves Teachers having itching eares, and they ſhall turn away their eares from the truth, and be turned unto Fables*, which is fulfild, not only by the *Papiſts* * (and ſome of thoſe *writers*, who by this way of *Allegoricall* interpretations opened a wide *doore* to *Popery*) but by divers *other* Sects of late *revived* and (as prodigious *tokens* of *Gods* diſpleaſure, and *our* ſucceeding *miſeries*) reinforced among *us*: The *Familiſts* eſpecially, who make almoſt all Scriptures *allegoricall*, what ever they be, hiſtories, prophecys, precepts, promiſes, threatnings, *&c.* yea the very *death* of *Chriſt*, Nation of the *Jewes*, City of *Ieruſalem*, &c. *ſome* of them (ſo incredibly *ſtrong* they are in their *deluſions**,) hold to be *meere* allegories, and *made* ſtories (like the fabulous *divinity* of the ancient *Heathens*) as of things that *never* were in *actuall* being. And the more *knowing* among them are ſufficiently *principled* with the prime maxims of that *occult Philoſophie* (otherwiſe called *goetick magick**, and plain *Conjuration*) which the Jewiſh *Cabaliſts* were ſo famous for of *old*, and *divers* of latter times have *revived* and improved, to the great danger of thoſe that are over eager of *curioſities*.

Now this *ſubtilizing* of Scriptures to meer *Allegories* & myſtical *extractions*, is of great *advantage* to *Satan*, becauſe, ſo far as this is

* *Putida appellem delyria, & nugas pluſquã aniles, expoſitiones*, &c. *Cunæus* de Rep. H.

* Some of their very Popes have counted the Goſpell a fable, others have made it little better by fabulous interpretations.

* Or deviliſhly *ſubtle* in their *malice* againſt the Truth.

* Quam *pueriles* vocant *Bapt. Port.* Magiæ nat. l. 1. c. 3. *Tritemius, C. Agrippa, Crellius*, &c. *Agrippa* in his Books *de occulta Philoſ.* delivers many things belonging to this myſtery of iniquity, as peculiar to thoſe Jewiſh *Cabaliſts*, l. 2. c. 14. & l. 3. c. 27, 30.

is perform'd, he can (by his *Inſtruments*) turne and winde them into any forme, as he liſts, to ſerve his *turnes* and purpoſes. For *Allegories* and Parables are *verſatilis materia, ut hinc illuc trahi, imo et duci poſſint**, of that nature, that by a *quick* fancie they may be eaſily drawn, and *applyed*, to things that were *never* intended. As in *chymiſtry*, they firſt diſſolve the *body* they worke on, into the *Philoſophers Mercurie*, or meer *vapour*, and then ſubject it to new *formes*: in like manner the *ſolidity* of Scriptures being *diſſolved*, and *exhaled*, into airy notions, and *Mercuriall* ſpeculations, they become *indifferent* to *any* formes, and *hackneys* to every vayne *oppinion*: but are by *this* meanes *diſabled* from vindicating the *Truth* in any point *ſubſtantially* and ſolidly. For the Rule is true, That * *Allegories and Parables are of no force at all in an Argument*, unleſſe they be alſo *aſſerted* in the ſame ſenſe by the holy-*Ghoſt* in the *Scriptures*. They being like *Pictures**, of which *ſome parts* are drawne meerly to ſhadow, ſet out and beare *other ſome* that are more eſſentiall to the *Piece*. And ſo drawn, that they ſeeme to regard and *countenance* every one that *beholds* them.

I would not be *miſtaken* here; It is evident that *ſome allegories* there be in *Scripture*; witneſſe that of *Paul*, *Gal.*4.24. *which things are an Allegorie* (ſpeaking of *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac* the ſonnes of *Abraham*) not as if they were not of reall and actuall *exiſtencie*, according to the holy ſtory; but that there was alſo a *myſticall* end of that *record* aſwell as a *morall*: and ſomewhat *elſe* pointed out, than what was *literally* recorded, *viz.* That *Abraham* as the *father of the faithfull*, ſhould have *two ſorts* of children or *beleevers*. One, of the † ſtranger the Bondwoman (*Agar*) *beleevers* (or the faithfull) under the *Law*, and the bondage thereof (underwhich the worſhip at *Jeruſalem* then was:) and *another* ſort of the free woman, or *Miſtris*, (ſo the name *Sarah* ſignifies) which were under *grace*, children of the *promiſe*, which ſhould drive out to bondwoman. The *New covenant* ſhould put *by* the *Old*, &c. And *divers* others Scriptures* of the *Old* Teſtament there bee *cited* and applyed in ſuch a *myſticall ſenſe* in the *New*, and ſo *different* from their ſcope and *literall ſenſe* (as they ſtand in the *old*) that they have more *puzled* lear-

* Ba. Verulam. Præf. ad Sap. Vet.

* *Theologia parabolica non eſt argumentativa.* They work upon *Fancy* and *Opinion*, but not *Reaſon*.

* *Pinguntur aliqua, ut pingantur reliqua.* Aug.

Gal.4.24. Ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα.

† Agar *peregrina*.

* As *Deut.*30. 12,13,14, as it is alledged by Paul, *Rom.*10. 5,6,7,8. And *Pſal.*8.4. with Heb.2.6. and Pſal.19.4 with *Rom* 10 18. *Hoſ.*11.1. with *Mat.*2.15. and many more.

learned and godly *Christians*, than any one thing beside pertaining to the holy *Scriptures*. Which *Parallel places* some very *learned* and *judicious** men are of opinion, cannot be otherwise reconciled than by *admitting* of a kind of true and holy *Cabal*, or mysticall and traditionall Interpretation of the *Law*, transmitted carefully, and preserved among the true *Prophets* and holy men of *God*, even to the *Apostles* times. Yet *not* formed into an *Art* or *science*, or made up of *rules* whereby to *practise* in this manner upon *any* part of Scripture; consisting *only* of some particular *observations*, concerning some *certaine* passages, and those onely such as are *mentioned* in the writings of the *Apostles*: the *like* whereunto cannot *now* be made, with *evidence* of Truth, *without* evidence of the *same* Authority that the *Apostles* had, &c.

* *Cunæus* de Rep. Heb. l. 3. c. 8.

And yet me thinks those *hints* that *Grotius* gives upon the words ἵνα πληρωθῇ, (Mat. 1. 22. & cha. 2. 15.) *That it might be* FULFILLED &c. are to *cleare* and *satisfying*, that we *need not* to admit any other *Cabal*, for the right understanding of *most* of those places *so* mystically applyed, *viz.* That the *Apostles* and *Evangelists* in such quotations doe *not* endeavour to *Prove* the Truth of the *Gospell*, to convince *gainsayers*, but to *illustrate* and cleer it up to *Beleevers*, for their further *satisfaction* in discerning an *harmonie* & *resemblance*, between the administrations *before* Christ, and those in the times of *Christ* and the *Gospell*. The holy *Ghost* would have us know that *God* in all the divine *dispensation* of *former* times, had an eye upon *Christ* and the things of *Christ* (the lamb slaine from the foundation of the world) and *fashioned* all his transactions, to and with his Church *especially*, to some kind of *Resemblance* of *Him*. For such a Resemblance doubtlesse there was, not only between the meer *Ceremonies* and *Christ*, but between the very *gesta*, also, or *things done* and recorded in former times, and the *things* of *Christ*. God did not only *speake* in parables, but *worke* in Parables, saith *Tertullian* *, and againe, *We know there was reall prophecye as well as verball* †. And the *Apostle* plainly asserts *as much* as this, 1 *Cor.* 10. 6. 11. *All these thinge happened unto them as Types, or patterns*, first *draughts*, or *proofes*, formes, *ensamples* &c.* (Speaking there *not* of

That they are not cited for *Proofe* of the Gospell *denyed*, but for *illustration* of the *Truth acknowledged*, and professed.

* De Resur. *Non minùs parabolis operatus Deus, quàm loquutus.*

† *Scimus ut vocibus, ita & rebus prophetatis.*

* 1 Cor. 10. 6. Τύποι ἡμῶν ἐγενήθησαν.

of *Ceremonies*, but *things done* and recorded) *God* gave out ſome *patterns* or ruder draughts (*beggerly elements*) of his *great worke* before the edition of the *work it ſelfe*, ſome *ſlight* and rough pieces, *firſt*, & *then* the *Maſter-peece*. He was pleaſed to ſtamp ſome *prints* or *ſignatures* of his *grand* production, upon his preceding providences, or *Introductions*. And therefore the learned *Cameron** ſayes, there were *two* kinds of *Types* of *Chriſt*. Types by *poſitive appointment*, and Types by *naturall ſimilitude*, &c. And accordingly that paſſage in *Hoſea** quoted, *Mat.* 2.15. *Out of Egypt have I called my Sonne*, is mentioned in the holy ſtory, to adviſe us, That the *Lord* did ſo minde his *great* worke of ſending his *Sonne* for our Redemption, that he both *ſhadowed* it out in *Iſraels* comming forth of *Egypt*, and alſo ſo *directed* the mind and expreſſions of his *Prophets*, that what they ſpake concerning the people of *Iſrael*, (who were all along a type of *Chriſt*) might in *many* things, as truly, if not more exactly *agree* to, and be affirmed of *Chriſt* himſelfe. And ſo many paſſages in the *Prophets* and *Pſalmes*, truly reporting ſome things that concernd the *Penmen* thereof, were yet ſo *directed* by the holy *Ghoſt*, that no other *language* could be deviſed that might more exactly *fit* the things of *Chriſt*. As* *They parted my garments, caſt lots, gave me vineger to drink, ſaid He truſted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, &c.* And many *Propheeyes* ſo foretold both the *Type* and the *Truth**, had a *double accompliſhment*: firſt in the thing it ſelfe *literally* ſpoken of; and a ſecond, and more excellent in & by *Chriſt*, of whom that thing was a *figure* or *type* † &c. And theſe *Propheeyes* and other like paſſages are often mentioned and *quoted* in the *New Teſtament*, *Not*, as Teſtimonies, to *prove*, but as Illuſtrations to *cleare* the matter in hand*.

This is a good *hint*, I ſay, for the underſtanding and clearing of *divers* places. Yet other *ſome*, I confeſſe there be, which (with *Cundus*) we might thinke doe require the admiſſion of an holy *Cabal*, eſpecially that, *Rom.* 10. 5,6,7,8. where Paul makes uſe of two paſſages in the writings of *Moſes*, and interprets the one as ſpoken of the *Righteouſneſſe of the Law*, and the other as of the *Righteouſneſſe of faith*, when as no ſuch difference is diſcernible

* *Ad* Mat. 19. 3. de Repudio. *Typi ſunt duorum generum: Legales & Naturales*, &c.

* *Hoſ.* 11. 1. I have heard of ſome copies of the N.T. that have not this quotation: but queſtionleſſe then they want it.

* *He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heele againſt me.*

* 2 Sam. 7. 12, 13, 14. is a notable inſtance.

† Like the words of *Jonathan* to his lad, ſpoken immediately to the boy, but principally concerning *David*, who was hid within the rock, 1 Sam. 20 37.

* *Hæc omnia, & quæ alia ſunt hujus generis, non in vim Argumenti proprie adhibentur, ſed ad illuſtrandum atq; confirmandum rem jam creditam.* Grot.

diſcernible in the *ſenſe* of them, as they are recorded by *Moſes Levit.* 18.5. and *Deut.* 30. 12, 13. for how ſhould the *Apoſtle*, with ſuch *Authority*, ſo differently *apply* them, unleſſe the *difference* of the ſenſes (of both places) was *tranſmitted* by way of *Cabal* or myſticall and Traditionall Divinity? (and ſuch *myſticall* Interpretations concerning the *Meſſiah*, are ſometimes given by the *Jewes* themſelves, beſides the *literall**;) or *elſe*, that ſuch a *difference* was *made* by the indiſputable prerogative of the Holy *Ghoſt*, inſpiring the *Apoſtle* thereunto. Lev. 18.5. Deut. 30. 12.

* Upon ſeverall paſſages, in the *Pſalms* eſpecially. *Vid.* Decapl. in Pſalm.

Now where ſuch a *Reſemblance* is *evident*, between any records of the Old Teſtament and the things of the *New*, there (no doubt) they may be lawfully and profitably *obſerved*. But to turne *All* into *meer* Allegories, as if there were *no* ſolidity or *reality* in the holy *Scriptures* (as *ſome* doe, both by the *Old* Teſtament and the *New*) or to goe *farther* than the Holy *Ghoſt* hath gone *before* us, in ſuch *myſticall* Interpretations, as of *Authority* to regulate *faith* or *practice*, is but (a piece of the Devills *chymiſtrie*) as the reſolving of Gold into *quicksilver*; or hammering out the *maſſie* into *leafe*, which, the *more compleatly* it is done, the *leſſe ſolidity* it hath, and if of very little *uſe* more than for Ornament and *flouriſh*.

We diſmiſſe this *particular* with that received *canon*; *Senſus cujuſque Scripturæ non niſi unicus: in vaticiniis tamen ſæpe compoſitus.* No place of *Scripture* hath more than *one ſenſe*: but (in the *Prophecyes* eſpecially) it is often times a *compounded ſenſe*; partly *literall*, and partly *myſticall*.

2. *Others* alſo make the word of God of *none effect* indirectly, who though they *allow* the *reality* of the Scriptures, without blowing them up *ſo* into *bubbles*, and *meer* Allegories, yet *deny* their immediat *inſpiration*, and withall their *abſolutneſſe* and *infallibilitie*. Of this ſort are *they* who have boldly *affirmd*, That the Epiſtles of *Paul* and the reſt in the New Teſtament, were no more than as if a friend ſhould write a good letter to any of us, which a man might read, and put in his pocket when he had done, and be at his owne choyce whether he will ever looke on it againe any more or no. They *acknowledge* that the *Penmen* of the Scriptures were *aſſiſted* indeed with the *Spi-*

rit of God, yet not *extraordinarily* aſſiſted, but onely as *all other* good men are, in writing good and profitable *bookes*; But, that they *wrote* as *themſelves* conceived, and were the principall *Authors* of their owne *writings*, as *other* men be &c.

Now *this*, where it takes place, greatly *weakens* all *Religion*, by taking away the *Rule*, *foundation*, and the very *ground* thereof, or rendering it ſo *weake* and *inevident*, that it cannot be of any *Authority* or *efficacie* upon the *Conſcience*. To *theſe*, that expreſſion of our *Saviours* (above mentioned) *exactly* agreeth. * Mar. 7. 13. Ἀκυροῦντες τὸν λόγον, &c *, *diſauthoriſing* the word of God, and thereby *weakning* it, and *making it of none effect*. For if the *Scriptures* were but *ordinarily* aſſiſted, and not *immediately* inſpired of the Holy *Ghoſt*, they were not (*then*) the *pure* and *infallible* word of *God*; but the ordinary *conceivings* of *men* fraile and ſubject to errour: and ſo no *Infallible* Rule, nor, indeed, *any rule* at all, but, as *other* mens writings *are*, might be queſtioned of *defects* and *miſtakes*. Now the *foundations* being thus *wholly* undermined, *all* Religion (the *ſuperſtruction*) muſt needs *fall* to ruine, or *ſtand* upon great *uncertainties* *, and at every mans *courteſie*. For where there is *no* certaine *Law*, nor *rule*, there can be no *evidence* of *Truth* or *untruth*, *ſinne* nor *Duty* †. Judge then if *this* may not paſſe for one of the Devills *deepe* reaches, and cunning *devices*.

* *Fralla vel leviter imminuta Authoritate veritatis omnia dubia remanebunt.* Aug.

† For by the Law is the knowledge of ſin; but ſin is not imputed where there is no Law, *Rom.* 3. 20. & 5. 13.

3. *Another* ſort there is, that *allow* their *Divine* authority, as the *Oracles of God* immediatly *inſpired*, perfect in their *quality* (every *booke*, chapter, period) for *Truth* and *holyneſſe*; who nevertheleſſe *aſperſe* and *charge* them with imperfection and *deficiencie*, in reſpect of their *fulneſſe* and *extent*. All that is contained in them is very *uſefull* and precious (ſay *theſe*) but yet they are but for the *training up* of Chriſtians during their *minority* (as *Grammar* Rules, for *boyes*) and are not able (ſay they) to acquaint the Soule with the *higheſt* diſcoveries of *God* and *Truth*, &c. And moſt *corruptly* they ſerve themſelves with that expreſſion of the *Apoſtle*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. *For now we ſee through a glaſſe darkly, but then face to face, &c.* This *glaſſe*, ſay they, is the *Scriptures*; through which we ſee *ſomething* of *God* indeed (whilſt we are *children* in underſtanding) but very *obſcurely* and

‖ Cor. 13. 11.

and *brokenly*; and therefore (ſay they) if ye would diſcern of God *clearly*, and ſee him *as he is*, ye muſt BREAKE the *glaſſe*, and *looke* quite *beyond Scriptures*. When ye become *men*, ye muſt put *away* theſe *childiſh things*, &c. ---But who is it that *perceives* not the Deviliſh *abuſe* of *that* Scripture in this *argument*, to weaken and diſparage *all* Scriptures?

Give me *leave* a little here. The *Apoſtle* is here comparing *Grace* with *Glory*, *Earth* with *Heaven*, *this* life with that to *come*, our ſtate of *imperfection* here, with that *Perfection* which is *there*, where the *Spirits of Juſt men are made perfect* (*Heb.*12.23.) *that* which is *in part**, with that which *is perfect**. And *determines* it thus; when that which is *perfect is come*, then *that* which is *in part ſhall be done away*. And (that we might not faile to *underſtand* him) amplifies this *abſolute* expreſſion by a *double compariſon*. Firſt, that *Grace* is to *Glory*, as *childhood* to *Manhood*: much *differing* in *degrees*, but *not* in *kind**. v.11. *when I was a child I ſpake as a child*, &c. Secondly, That *grace* is to *Glory* as the *ſight* (of a perſon or thing) in a *glaſſe*, to the *full*, *immediat*, and *naturall view* thereof, *face to face*. In a *glaſſe* we ſee, *not* the thing *it ſelfe*, but the *ſpecies* or *Image* of the thing, and *that* but in *part*: but *there* we ſhall ſee *face to face*, (ſhall ſee God *himſelfe*) and that *ſo* as *nothing* of *God* ſhall be *hidden* from us. He will not *there* cover us *with his hand** leſt we ſhould ſee his *face*, but we ſhall *know even as** *alſo we are known*. We have the very *ſame thing* expreſſed in *other* and *fewer words*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. *Whilſt at home*, *in the body*, *we are abſent from the Lord*: *For we walke by faith not by ſenſe or ſight*. The *caſe* is *this*. The moſt holy *God* is ſo *exceeding* glorious, that the *immediat* manifeſtations of *himſelf* would *deſtroy* the *being* of any *Saint* on *Earth*, for he *dwels in the light which no man can approch unto*, *whom no man hath ſeen*, *nor can ſee*†, 1 *Tim.*6.16. This glory the *Lord* calls his *Face*, Exo.33.18. *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy Glory*. Anſ. *Thou canſt not ſee my face*. But this I will doe for thee, *While my glory paſſeth by*, *Ile put thee in a cleft of the Rock and cover thee with my hand: and I wil take away mine hand*, *and thou ſhalt ſee my back parts*, *but my face ſhall not be ſeen*. 1. *Not* ſeen *abſolutely*; but yet *comparatively* with

* Τὸ τέλειον.
* Το ἐκ μέρους.

* Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected.
E, non differunt ſpecie, ſed gradu.

* Exod.33.22.
* Kabôt, even as; a note of *ſimilitude*, not of *equality*: for God is *infinit* in knowledge, ſo ſhall *we never* be, and yet be *perfect*.
† And *our God is a conſuming fire*, Heb.12.29.
Ut ſenſile excellens deſtruit ſenſum, ſic intelligibile intellectum.

other Prophets even *Moſes* (that was thus *denyed*) *ſaw his ſimilitude and He ſpake with him Face to face* † *apparently, and not in dark ſpeeches*, Num. 12 6,8. And *beleevers* under the *new Covenant* ſaw him alſo *face to face* in compariſon of *Moſes* and thoſe under the *Law*. (*That* miniſtration was *glorious* ſaith the *Apoſtle** , but *this* of the Goſpell *more glorious*) for *the onely begotten Sonne** *He hath revealed him*: being the effulgent * *brightneſſe of the Fathers glory*, and the expreſſe jmage or *Character of his perſon*, Heb. 1. *In him dwelleth all the fulneſſe of the Godhead bodily*†, and the divine *glory ſhines in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *Moſes* had *ſome* glorious *impreſſions* of *God* upon his *face* (2 Cor. 3. 8.) but *that glory was to be done away*; whereas the *Glory* of *God* in the *face* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, is a *perfect* glory, and a *permanent* Glory; yea and an *operative* and *powerfull* Glory too, For *by beholding* (in him) *as in a glaſſe, with open face, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the ſame Image from glory to glory*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. Beholding the *fulneſſe* of *God* in the perſon of the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* (in whom *it pleaſed the father that all fulneſſe ſhould dwell*) *of his fulneſſe we alſo receive, and grace for grace. I have given them* (ſaith Chriſt) *the words which thou gaveſt me, and they have received them* (Joh. 17. 8.) *And the glory which thou gaveſt me I have given them*, v. 22. There is a *tranſmiſſion* and *Impreſſion* of *Glory*, from the *face* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, upon the *Soule* in the *Goſpell*: whereby we are made *conformable unto his Image*, and *partakers of the divine Nature*, by the *anoynting* of the *Spirit of God*, which is alſo *a ſpirit of Glory*. The *Goſpel* is the only *mirour* wherein the *face* of the Lord *Jeſus* is to be *ſeen*, and therein the *glory* of *God* himſelfe, by an *eye* of *faith*. Yet ſo great is the *diſproportion* between the *Soule* of man (whilſt at home in the body) and thoſe *flamie*, pure and *ſuper-exellent Glories* that are in the *face* God (*eſſentially* and *immediately* in God himſelfe) that we cannot *behold* him but in a *glaſſe*; and but *darkly* and *brokenly* with *that* neither; as it were in *a riddle*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, and but *in part*, * &c. and thus *darkly* and *brokenly*, not for want of *viſibility* or *conſpicuity* in the *glory* reveled, nor yet for want of *clearneſſe* and *manifeſtation* in the *Goſpell* reveling; but in regard of the *deadneſſe* and *darkneſſe*

† *Pe,el,pe.* Heb. *Mouth to mouth* anſwers to στόμα κατὰ στόμα. Face to face, Vid. *Camer.* ad *Mat.* 19. 3. de *Phariſæis.*

*2 Cor. 3. 9, 10.

* John 1. 17.

* Ἀπαύγασμα.

† Heb. 1. 3. Col. 2. 9.

1 Cor. 13 11.

* Δι ἐσόπτρου, ἐν αἰνίγματι, ἐκ μέρους.

of

of our *faculty* to diſcerne of *ſpirituall* things. Unto which *weakneſſe* of ours through the gracious indulgence of our good *God*, the myſtery of the *Goſpell* is *marvelouſly* accommodated and *fitted*, even to two *contrary* uſes, *viz. ad Involucrum, et Illuſtrationem:* For a *light* to diſcover ſo much *glory* as we are *here* able to *receive*, and alſo for a ſacred and reverend *veile* to thoſe *unrevealed* and inviſible *glories* of the *Face* of *God*, which *no* mortall can *prie* into which *ſafety*. Thus, *with his hand he* puts us in the *cleft* of the *Rock*, and *covers* us that we periſh not at the preſence of his *Face*, and alſo with the ſame *hand* diſcovers and *points out* unto us, what of *himſelfe* may be *ſeen* and known by us, to give us *fellowſhip* with *himſelfe* in *Glory*, through *Chriſt Ieſus*.

But *then*, when that which is *perfect is come*; when he hath brought us into full *poſſeſſion* of the *Inheritance* of the Saints in *light*, and to the *Reſurrection of the dead*, theſe *glaſſes* (with their *broken* and imperfect *diſcoveries*) ſhall be of *nouſe*; * *that which is in part ſhall be done away*, we ſhall have no need of the *word*, then, nor Sacraments *then*, &c. but ſhall have a *beatificall viſion* of God, *ſhall know as we are known* (*certainly* and *perfectly*) and *ſee him* as he *is**, ſhall no longer need our *crutches* when our *Infirmities* and *deformities* ſhall *vaniſh* away, and give place to the *perfection* of *ſtrength* and *beauty* in us. For when *Chriſt who is our life* ſhall *appeare*, *then ſhall we alſo appeare with him in Glory**, being transformed from our *vile body*, and *faſhioned like unto his glorious body**: heightned and changed to ſuch a *condition* as we are *not now* in capacity to *underſtand*. For *now are we the ſonnes of God, and it doth not yet appeare what we ſhall be: but we know that when he ſhall appeare, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is* †. But till our *mortality* be ſo *ſwallowed up of life*, and we enabled to ſee *God* face to *face* (which is the very *eſſence* and formality of *Heaven* it ſelfe, and ſo not at-

* Τὸν τὸ ἐκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται.

* 1 John 3.3.

* Col. 3.4.
* Phil. 3.21.

† This is that *manifeſtation of the ſons of God*, for which *the earneſt expectation of the creature waiteth*, *Rom.* 8.19. when that *incomparable glory* ſhall be *revealed* in us (ſpoken of, ver. 18.) which is alſo called *the Adoption*, and *the Redemption of the body*, ver. 23. *The redemption of the purchaſed Poſſeſſion*, *Eph.* 1.14. and *your redemption*, *Luk.* 21. 28. It is alſo called, *The time of reſtitution of all things*, *Acts* 3.21. and *The new heavens and new earth promiſed by the Prophets*, 2 *Pet.* 3.13. alſo, *The Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 *Pet.* 1.13.

tainable on *earth*) we muſt with all *care*, reverence and *thankfullneſſe* make *uſe* of our *Glaſſe*; leſt otherwiſe we *erre in viſion* and *ſtumble in Iudgement* of ſpirituall *things*: and (*inſted* of the high diſcoveries of unrevealed *light* and *glory*) come to have our eyes *blinded* and hearts *infatuated*, to embrace the *fancies* of our own *brain*, or the gliſtering *impoſtures* & deluſions of the *Devill*, who carryes on his work with *all power*, and with all *deceivableneſſe of unrighteouſneſſe in them that periſh, becauſe they received not the love of the Truth that they might be ſaved** and leſt alſo *for this cauſe God ſhould ſend us ſtrong deluſions that we ſhould beleeve a lye*, &c. leſt he *chuſe our Deluſions**, and leave us to become *vaine* in our *imaginations*, and to have *our fooliſh hearts darkned*, becauſe *when we knew God we glorified him not as God, neither were thankfull, as Rom.* 1.21. Yet this *Satan* would labour and *perſwade* us to; to *breake* or throw *by* our *glaſſe*, that ſo we might not *diſcerne his Impoſtures*; to *heave* our *Card* and *Compaſſe* overboard, and then *ſteer* our courſe by *his* Lantern, or elſe take *him* in for our *Pilot*, that ſo hee may *tranſport* us with a ſpeedy paſſage into the *land of deſtruction*. Juſt as the *Prophet* did by the *Syrian* army at *Dothan*; blind them *firſt*, *then* offer his ſervice as an officious *guide*, and *lead* them, at *length*, into the *midſt* of their *Enemies*, that would have cut them a peeces*.

* 2 Theſ. 2 10, 11.
* Iſa. 66.4.
* 2 King. 6.19. *This is not the way, neither is this the City; follow me, &c. but he led them into the midſt of Samaria.*

And *therefore* when ye hear men pretend to *diſcoveries above and beyond Scripture*, be ſure of *this* (whoſoever they be, be it an *Apoſtle* or an *Angell* from heaven*) they ſpeake but the *language* of the *Devill* and *Antichriſt*, who would exalt *himſelf* above *God*, and his damnable *deluſions* above the *Word*: and who by this practice not onely *acts* his *Pride*, but *ſerves* his *Intereſt*. For he knows well enough, that as *faith* is our *ſhield* to defend *our ſelves*, ſo the *word* is our fiery *ſword* to *offend him*; and to *diſcover*, *conſume* and *cut in peeces* all his *ſnares* and ſtratagems; and *therefore* it is, that *he* ſo mightily and ſo ſubtilly (in ſo many *ſeverall** formes and *different* inſtruments) ingageth himſelfe *againſt* it. And if he be demanded *why* he pretends to ſuch *tranſcendent* Notions above the *Scriptures*; It is *becauſe* his *ayme* is onely to make us *miſſe* the faire *marke* of *Truth*, which

* Gal. 1.8.
* *Ut quæ non proſint ſingula multa juvent.*

is

is *done* as well by *over* ſhooting as by falling *ſhort*, by an *errour* on the *right* hand as by one on the *left*. There be *ſome* birds he knowes will not be taken with *chaffe*, nor abuſed with *groſſe* and *vulgar* fallacies: which breath after *heaven* upon *earth*, and aſpire to the *neareſt* reſemblance unto *God* himſelf, and the *higheſt* participations and improvements of *Light* and *Glory*: and for *theſe* he is alſo *furniſhd*, pretends to *fit* and *fill* them with *Angells* food, the very floure of *paradiſe*, beyond the *fineſt of the wheat*, and to which the *manna* of *this wilderneſſe* (the *word* of God) is but very *ordinary*, *poore* and *light* proviſion. And by *this meanes*, as the *Serpent beguiled Eve** (through his ſubtilty) ſo the mindes of many *zelous* Chriſtians are *corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt*. There is many a good *merchant*, that would hardly be cheated with counterfeit *money* (ſilver or gold) or *commodities* that he uſually *deales* in, that might yet *ſoone* bee *deceived* if he ſhould advance his trade to *pearles* and *Diamonds*, or be perſwaded to deale for the *Philoſophers ſtone*. Nothing is more *naturall* to the *Soule* of man than this unhappy *curioſity*, and *thirſt*, after *knowledge* of things that are *not* to be *known*. As it was our *firſt* Sinne, ſo the influence thereof is *ſtill diſcernible*, upon almoſt all our ſwervings *from God*, yea and our very inquiries *after God*. Although by the things wch he hath *revealed* we may underſtand there are ſome things which he hath *concealed* (as *ſecrets*) which as we *know not*, neither have *meanes* to know, ſo we ought not to *enquire* into: for they belong to *God* himſelfe, without theprivitie of *men*, *Saints*, *Angels*, (at leaſt in *ſome* caſes, and for a *time*) Yea there were *ſome* which the *Sonne himſelfe knew not*, but *onely the Father*, *Mar.* 13.32. And therefore our *Saviour* checks his *Diciples*, overcurioufly inquiring into things *unrevealed* (firſt & *laſt*) with *Veſtrum non eſt noſſe, &c. It is not for you to know the things which the father hath ſtated in his owne power.* Yea and not only in the immediat *things* of *God*, but in thoſe alſo which concern'd *themſelves*, and *one another*, he cuts them off *ſhort* when they grew too *buſy*, as *Ioh.* 21.21,22. *Chriſt* had told *Peter* what ſhould befall *him*; *Iohn* was there too, and *Peter* would faine *know* what ſhould become of *Iohn* alſo τι προς σε τουτον; but what of *him* Sir?

* This was *the* very ſtratagem by which he overcame our firſt *parents*: and the very *doore* and *inlet* of *ſin* and *death* into the world.

Neſcire velle quæ Magiſter maximus docere non vult, erudita inſcitia eſt.

Sir? *Lord, what shall he doe? whats that to thee?* (saith our *Saviour*) *follow thou me, &c.* And *Paul* notes it, not simply as a *marke* of *seducers*, but as the *ground, root* or leading *cause* of their very *Errours*, their *Intruding into those things which they have not seen being vainely pufft up, &c. and not holding the head, from which the whole body* spirituall *is* in a naturall way *nourished*, &c*. For his *owne* part he is *determined to know nothing but Iesus Christ and him crucified**: & for *preachers*, gives in *charge*, *That they teach no other doctrine; but avoyd those* intricate *subtleties*, & endless *uncertainties* which minister *questions* (and nourish *controversies*) rather than *godly edifying in* (*the*) faith* : And, for *People*, with all gravity and Apostolick authority, *bespeaks* every one expresly, that they would *not* soare *to high*, not be *over wise*, nor *think* or *know above* and *beside what they ought to know*, but *thinke* and *know to sobriety*, *Rom.* 12.3*. Not *buzze* (like *flies*) about the *flame*, nor *mount* with waxen wings to neere the *Sun*, lest we *perish* in our fooliish *enterprise*.

Col. 2. 18, 19. Eph. 4. 15, 16. * 1 Cor. 2. 2. * 1 Tim. 1 3, 4. *Rom. 12. 3. Μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν παρ' ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν.

So it is surely in all Copies, and accordingly I find it in most Translations, *Lat. It. Fr.* and *English* rendred indefinitely, however the *New* Translation *Engl.* (and an old one) render it (according to *C.*) *limitedly, of himself. Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.* But surely *Ari. Montanus* hath the true *literall* sense. *Non supra sapere præter quod oportet sapere*; and the Fr. Translat. *Que nul ne presume de sçavoir outre ce qu'il faut sçavoir*, or as another, *Que nul ne sente* (*ou pense,*) *plus qu'il n' appertient de sentir.* And so that of *Diodat*, *Che non habbia alcun sentimento sopra cio che conviene havere, anzi senta a sobrietà. c.* (*nota lui*) consanto ritenimento dentro a' termini della rivelatione della parola di Dio, unica regola della fede; *That none presume to know beyond that which he ought*; *That no man have a thought above that which it behoves, &c.* but keep within the bounds and compasse of the Revelations in the word of God, the only rule of faith. *Diodat.* in loc. ¶ These had been spared, were it not to justifie our departure from the common Translation in our sense of this Scripture, that we might not seem to *wrest* it, &c.

The ill *consequence* of such rash *attempts*, was pretily *shadowed* out in the punishment of *Pentheus*; who climbing up into a *tree* of the *grove* to discover the *secrets* and *mysteries* of the more private *sacrifices*, was *striken* with a strange kinde of *madnesse*, *viz.* to be *certaine of nothing*, but to thinke that *every thing* he looked on was *multiplyed*. The *Sun* seemd to him to be *more* than *one*, and he could not tell *which* of them was the Sun *indeed*:

dred: and when he would goe to the *City* two or three *Thebes* appeared to his *fancie*, and he could not tell which was the *true* City; but ran *up and downe* between the *imaginary*, and the *true*, till he was *wearied* out and *bewildred* in the *fields*. Intimating, that when people *lifted up* with pride and *curiosity*, clamber up into the forbidden *tree of knowledge* to prie into the *secrets of God*, they are *ordinarily* given *up* to a spirit of *delusion*, ambiguity and *uncertainty*, in every thing appertaining to *Religion* and *Godlinesse*. Being once *removed* from their *grounds*, they wander *beyond* all *bounds* in the vast *wildernesse* of *Errour*. They follow the *Fancies* of their *owne* hearts, *flit* and *shift* from one *conceit* to another, till at length they know not *where* to *fix*; and are so much *every where*, that at last ye can *certainely* finde them *no where*. They cannot *resolve* themselves *which* is the *Church*, or *which* is the *Truth*, but (restlesse, as the *first matter*) they are *ever* seeking and *learning*, and yet are *never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth*, as the Holy *Ghost* describes them, 2 Tim. 3.7. To these I would only put this *question*, and then dismisse them; The *discoveries* which ye say ye have *above* and *beyond* the holy *Scriptures*, by what *power* or *faculty* do ye *receive* them? How do ye *apprehend* them, by *Reason* or by *Faith*? If by *Reason*, let them be *demonstrated* from their principles; that the *same* Reason, in *other* men, may *discerne* and judge of them. For the discoveries of *Reason* are *conforme* to *Reason*: and the *Invisible things of God* discoverable by *Reason*, are no *mysteries*; but may be *clearly seen and understood*, Rom. 1.20. But if ye say by *faith*, or *perswasion*; where is the *ground* of your perswasion? or *what*, the *Testimony* and *Authority*, to which ye give such *credit*? (for ye cannot *beleeve* that which yee have not *heard*, since *faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God**.) And if *neither* by Reason nor faith, your pretended *discoveries* are but meer *conceits*, Opinions & *Imaginations* of your owne fancies, or els the *delusions* of the Devill*. For they cannot surely be of *sense*: the *bodily* sense cannot reach a *Spirituall* object, much lesse the *Interiora Dei*, the secret and *deep things of God*. And as for the *spirituall sense* or *sight*, the *Soules vision*, the *Apostle* saith, we attaine *not* to *that*, *here*; we

* Ro 10 14,17.

* *Non datur in viatoribus lumen medium intellectuale, specie distinctum à scientia, fide & opinione, fideque clarius aut excellentius.* Vid. Ro. Baronii Philos. Theol. ancill. Exer. 3. Art. 7.

walke not, here, *by sight* (2 Cor. 5.7.) *but by Faith*, and upon *report*. (And accordingly speaks, of *nothing* that he *saw* in *Paradise*, when wrapt up into the *third heavens*, but only that *there* he *heard* some *strange words*: and even those *words* were *unspeakable* *, he saith, and *such as no man may utter*, 2 Cor. 12.4.) Ther's *no* immediat *vision* of *God* in *this* life; no *sight* of him, but in and through some *glasse*: either through his *works*, with an eye of *Reason*, or in his *Word*, with an eye of *Faith*. —— But, perhaps ye will say, we have *assurance*, and evidence *sufficient*, of what we receive, the *spirit* within, or else some *voice* or *vision* without, &c. —— Ye *have*? But *then* such your discoveries and *Revelations* are either the *same* with those in the *Word*, or els they are *other*, and differ from the *Word*. If the *same* with the word, then they are not *above* or *beyond* Scripture, but onely some *clearer* manifestations of Scripture *Truths*. And if *such*, do but *evidence* and make them *out* from the *Scriptures*, and every sound hearted *Christian* will be glad to *entertaine* them, and blesse *God* for them; for *such* clearings up of Scripture-truths we *pray* and *wait* for. (*Provided* alwaies, that we go *no farther* beyond the writings of the *Apostles*, than the *Apostles* did beyond those of the *Prophets* *; *saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come*: and, where they went beyond the *received* and common *sense* of those ancient *Scriptures*, justifie such *extraordinary* Interpretations by true *miracles*.) But if your discoveries be *other* than what the *word* holds forth, take your *answer* then from the Holy *Ghost* in the *Word* (which every *sober* Christian resolves to adhere unto, rather than relinquish it, and venture their *Soules* upon mens privat *whimsies*) ye shall find it, *Gal.* 1.7,8,9 *There be some that trouble you, and would* pervert *the Gospell of Christ. But though We* [Apostles] *or an* ANGELL *from Heaven preach Gospell unto you, beside, or above that which we have preached, let him be* ACCURSED, And *lest* any might think he spake it *unadvisedly*

* 2 Cor 12 4 Ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα ἃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἀνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι, *Ineffabilia verba, quæ nulla vi, ne sanctorum quidem possint explicari.* Clem Alex. Beza.

* Acts 16,22.

Gal. 1.7,8. Θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, *volentes invertere*, Ber. Ari. Mont. *vel pervertere*, Trem. *convertere*, vulg. *renverser*, Fr. properly, that would alter the *posture* of the Gospell, or shift it q. from side to *side*, or place to *place* (as a man in his bed.)

(the

(the *expression* is so *high* and extraordinary) He layes *more weight* upon it, *v.9. As we said before, so say I now againe, if any preach gospell unto you, beside, above, beyond*, or *other than that which yee have received, let him be Accursed* (anathema.) The *Truth* of God, it seemes, was so well *known*, bounded, and *fixed* then*; that whosoever delivered any thing as *Gospell-doctrine* (and such *your* discoveries must be, or els they are but *superfluous* impertinencies) that was *strange and divers* (be it *above* and *beyond*) if materially *differing* from the *substance* of that which was *then* delivered and received (should it be *Paul* himselfe, or an *Angell* from Heaven, a *strange* supposall!) was to be held *Accursed*; and to be *excommunicate* even from *common* civilities†; and this not by meer *concession*, to be at our *courtesie*, but by Apostolick *command*, and strict *injunction*.

† Εἴ τις ὑμᾶς εὐαγγελίζεται παρ' ὃ παρελάβετε, &c. v. 8. παρ' ὃ εὐηγγελισάμεθα. Præter quod Evangelizavimus, & accepistis. Ar. M. Ber. *præter quam quod*, Trem. *Ultra eo*, Diod. beside, beyond, above, Rom 1. 25 *served the creature*, παρὰ τὸν κλίσαντα, *above the Creator*. The Translat. of παρὰ *contra, against*, is rare, if not singular. *Rom* 16.17.

* The whole counsell of God was then made known, as to the substance thereof, although not all then *written*: the *writing* therof being not essentially necessary, to the *being* of the Word *then*, and yet absolutly necessary to *evidence* the Word unto *us* now: (who have not *Apostles* infallibly inspired to *determine* of Doctrines, and to *evidence* that their infallibility by *Miracles*:) As they say in Law, *Scriptura non est necessaria ad substantiam legis, sed ad probationem tantùm.* Glos. ad Inst. Imp. lib. 1. Tit. 2. † *John* 10, & 1 *John* 4 5,6. Compliance or non-compliance with the *world*, and conformity or non conformity to the *Apostles doctrine*, are laid downe as infallible *marks of the spirit of Truth, and the spirit of Errour*.

Away then with those vaine *pretences* to things that *are* not (nor *can* they be) and obey the *Command* and *counsell* of *God*; *To the Law and to the Testimony*, and keep close to *them*, for there is nothing appertaining to *God* and *godlinesse*, fit for *Christians* to *know*, or lawfull to be *searcht* into, but *there* it is to be found, in *plaine* and positive expressions, or els by easy and naturall *deductions**; if it please the *Lord* by his *Spirit* to *open our eyes to see* the perfection and *wonders of his Law*. And, *whosoever* they be, or what *new light* soever they pretend, *if they speake not according to this WORD, it is because there is no LIGHT in them*, Isa.8.20. And *remember* this, that *Jesus Christ, the Apostle and high Priest of our Profession, was faithfull in his owne house**: And being the great *Prophet* of his *Church*, hath *given to us the words which he received of the Father*, hath *manifested*

Isa.8 20.

* *Quic quid nos meliores beatosque facturum est, aut in aperto, aut in proximo posuit.* Sen.

* Heb. 3, 2.

*his Name** and *Truth*, and left it ſo *entire* and perfect*, upon *record* in the *Scriptures*, that *they* are every way *adaquat* and proportioned to the *duty* of our *knowledge*, and to the *extent* of all *Truths* to be known: a *rule* of *faith* and *life compleat* and *univerſall*; *able to make us wiſe to ſalvation*, to *make the man of God perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good workes.*

* Joh. 17. 6, 8.
* Joh 15. 15. *All things that I have heard of my Father, have I made known unto you.*
2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17.

4 Laſtly, The *Scriptures* are alſo *wholly* and *directly* ſlighted, and *made of none effect*, by a ſort of *ſecret* enemies, who though they *cannot deny* but that they are *really* true, *immediately* inſpired, and every way *ſufficient*, &c. Yet aſperſe and charge them with *invincible difficulty* and *obſcurity*. Like thoſe evill *Spies* concerning the Land of *Canaan*, who confeſſed it was a very excellent Land indeed, (*flowing with milk and hony*,) yet made ſuch ſtrange reports of the dangers and *difficulties* thereof, that they *ſlandred* the Land, and *diſcouraged* the people with their *tales* and ſtories of *Giants*, and Cities *walled up to Heaven*, * &c. So doe theſe ſubtle *detractors* and *concealed* enemies of *God* and *Truth*, by the holy *Scriptures*. There be indeed, ſay they, living *waters*, good ſtore, in theſe *wells* of ſalvation, but they are ſo *profound* and *deep*, that few or none can *draw* them: and the ſacred *oracles* of God they *be* full of *light* and *glory*, but their Truth is *vayled* under *myſticall* and *abſtruſe* language, and their *light* (as *God* himſelfe*) dwels in the *thick darkneſſe*, and *clouds* not penetrable by *vulgar* capacities or *underſtandings*, &c.

* Num. 13, 28. 32.
* 1 King. 8. 12.

This is *one* of the *many* clamorous *cavils* which *Papiſts*† make againſt the *Scriptures*, wherein they are *reſolved* to take no *anſwer*, otherwiſe they had been *ſilenced* long agoe. They are *obſcure*, ſay they, and *hard*, difficult and very *doubtfull*, not to the *ignorant* only, and unlearned, but even to thoſe of deepeſt *underſtandings*. (Like the *ſealed booke* that the * *Prophet* ſpeaks of, which could not be *read*; neither by the *learned* nor *unlearned*: not by the *unlearned*, becauſe a *Booke*, and they cannot ſkill to *read*; nor yet by the *learned*, becauſe a *ſealed* booke, and they could not *open* it.) And under *this* pretence they *debarre* the People of the *Scriptures* wholly, as if thoſe *waters of the Sanctuary* were every where *bottomles*, waters *of ſwimming*, and *not* to be *paſſed* over*.

† There is hardly any of their writers, but exclaime of the Scriptures for *obſcurity* and *uncertainty*, as well as deficiency; that they may make the world beleeve that there muſt needs be a more ſufficient Rule of Faith, and Judge of Controverſies, and that forſooth muſt be the Pope of Rome.
* Ezek. 47. 5.

And

And there be *others* alſo that are great pretenders againſt *Antichriſt*, who, (as in ſundry other *Principles* the very *ſeeds* and *Roots* of *Popery*, ſo alſo) in *this* matter, hold with the *Papiſts*, and *ſpeake* out every whit as *loud* againſt the *Scriptures* as *they*; ſerving their *turnes*, of *ſome* particular paſſages and *expreſſions*, whereby to ſlight and weaken *all* Scripture with pretence of *Obſcurity*. As, *without controverſy great is the myſtery of Godlineſſe*, And *we ſpeake the wiſedome of God in a myſtery*. *How can I underſtand without an interpreter?* &c. We ſhall not ſtand to examine their pretended *grounds* for his *ſlander*, but rather *point* at the *intereſts* and *ends* of Satan, which this practice *ſerves* to; and they are principally *Three*.

Firſt, Satan would make us beleeve that the *Scriptures* are ſo very *obſcure*, to the end that he may *unſettle* our *Indgements* concerning all *Truths* conteyned *in* them, and received *from* them; and make us queſtion them as meer *uncertainties*. For the holy *Scriptures* are the onely *Rule* and *Law* of *Truth* in matters of *Religion*; and if the *Law** be *obſcure*, the *things* required or forbiden therein muſt needs be *inevident* and *doubtfull*; and by conſequence, the things that are received from the *Scripture* as *unqueſtionable* verities, would be but conjecturall *opinions*, and doubtfull *aphoriſmes* or *determinations*. This is one of his *devices* againſt the *Truth*, wherein he hath *ſo* farre prevailed, that *ſome* (even good men, we hope) have been heard to *queſtion*, points that might be demonſtrated to be *Fundamentall* in *Religion* (to thoſe that profeſſe to *owne* the Scriptures;) and have begun to make *problems* of very *principles* in the *Goſpell*. And this may be *part* of the *account*, why ſo many that would be thought to have attained unto *Religion* in its *purity*, have *not* ſuffered themſelves to be *perſwaded*, that there *ought* to be any *hedge* or *bounds* ſet (even to profeſſed *Chriſtians*) in matters of *Conſcience* and *Religion*, *viz.* becauſe they are poſſeſſed with this *Imagination*, of the *inevidence* of *Truth*, and *obſcurity* of the *Scriptures*; which tends to the *ſubverſion* of *Chriſtianity*, and eats out the very *life* and *heart* of all *Religion*, and the *Rule* thereof, together.

* *Idem eſt non eſſe, & non apparere*, is received in Law.

Secondly, By *this* pretence *Satan* carryes on his *buſines* (of

deſtroying *ſoules*, and poyſoning the *Church* with damnable Doctrines) more *freely*, and with the leſſe *interruption*: for when charged throughly with (*the ſword of the ſpirit*) the written *word of God*, or when his *Inſtruments* are *urged* to *prove* their ſtrange doctrines clearly from the *Scriptures*; oh, ſay they*, the *Scriptures* are *intricate* and *myſticall*, dark and *obſcure*, and they muſt not be thought to *intend* what they ſeeme to *ſpeake*, &c. and here they *refuge*. And indeed if *Hereticall* perſons ſhould once ſincerely *acknowledge* the holy *Scriptures*, to be a clear and ſufficient *Rule* of *Faith*, and *Judge* of *controverſies*, they muſt withall reſolve to *renounce* their falſe *opinions*, becauſe they are *not* to be *found* in the *Scripture*. This the *Devill* and his *Inſtruments* know well enough, and ſome* of them doe not ſtick to *confeſſe*, that divers of their *chiefe* points of *Popery* are *not* to be found in the *Scriptures*, (*viz.* The *Popes* ſupremacie, ſervice of the *Maſſe*, worſhiping of *Images*, Invocation of *Saints*, Communion in *one kind*, &c.) and therefore they would beare the world in hand, that the *Scriptures* are *inſufficient* and *obſcure*, that they may with the better *credit* keep up their *trumpery*, which hath no foundation *in*, but much oppoſition and confutation *from* the *Scripture*. And for the *ſame* Reaſon, the ſeminaries and followers of *other* falſe doctrines (*more* fundamentally *deſtructive*, ſome of them, to *Religion* and the *ſoules* of men, if more *can* be, then the courſeſt *Popery*) report the *Scriptures* to be generally *myſticall* and *darke*, that ſo they may make them *of none effect*, diſable them as an *incompetent judge* of their corrupt *opinions*, which they know well enough would never *endure* a faire and equall *tryall* by the *Scriptures**.

Thirdly, This pretence of *Obſcurity* is the way to *diſcourage* many from *ſearching* the Scriptures, and to take men off from the *ſtudy* of them; that ſo they may neither be able to *diſcerne* and vindicate *Truth*, nor yet to ſee their owne, and *convince* other mens *errours*. For *who* would beſtow time and paine in *ſearching* for that which he is *perſwaded* he ſhall *never find*, (viz the true *mind* and *meaning* of the Holy *Ghoſt* in the *Scriptures*) and which *if* he *ſhould* finde, yet he ſhall *never* be *aſſured* of it, or be able to ſay for *certaine* he *hath** *found* it? Which is *every* mans

* *Quum ex Scripturis arguuntur, in accuſationem convertuntur ipſarum Scripturarum, quaſi non recte habeant neque ſint ex authoritate, & varie ſint dictæ, & non poſſit inveniri veritas*, &c. Iren. **Caniſ. Catech.* and divers others.

* No wonder if they charge the Scriptures of obſcurity, whoſe opinions cannot be found in the Scriptures.

* *Popes.*

caſe

caſe that is ſeduced to thinke, the holy *Scriptures* are ſo *intricate* and full of *obſcurity*.

Obiect. But why then are the *contents* of the Scripture called *myſteries*? and if they be not *obſcure*, and *hard* to be underſtood, what need is there of your *Commentaries* and *expoſitions*? to what purpoſe is all your *preachings* upon them, and *expoundings* of them, which yet *agree not* one with another, &c?

An. 1 The *Scripures*, and all things therein conteyned, are *not* myſteries in *themſeves*, nor in reſpect of *God*. To Godward they have *no darkneſſe* at all. And in it *ſelfe* the Scripture is very *cleare* (both for *matter* and *forme*) and full of *Glory*; And therefore called a *Light*, *Lamp*, *Fire*, *Glaſſe*, &c. but what *obſcurity* there *is*, is, only in reſpect of *us*: Not in reſpect of the *obiect*, but in the defect of our *faculty*, to diſcerne of them.

2 The *principall contents* of the *Scriptures* are *myſteries* indeed, and meere *obſcurities* to the *naturall* and *carnall* ſenſe and *underſtanding* of *all* men. We can no more *judge* of them than the *blind* of *colours* or *fooles* of *wiſdome*. *Fleſh and bloud** neither *reveales* nor *receives* them. *Chriſt* crucified * the *mayne* of *All*, is to the *Jewes a ſcandall, and to Greeks fooliſhneſſe*. *Pauls* profoundeſt *divinity* was but *babling* to the *Academicks*, and but *madneſſe* to the *Courtiers*. The *naturall* man neither *doth* nor *can* perceive them*. We *cannot*, as in *Arts* and ſciences make *demonſtrations* of them from *inward* principles*, nor from rationall *obſervation*. And therefore they cannot be infuſed by *conſtraint* in any ſort, but muſt be *taught* of *God*, or *never* to purpoſe *learned* of *man*. And *theſe* things are *obſcure* in *Tradition*, or *vocall* diſcoverie, as well as in *Scripture*, to *our* weak and corrupt *Nature*.

* Mat.16.16.
* 1 Cor.1. 23.
* 1 Cor.2.14.
* The Goſpell is *myſterium patefactum*, *Col.*1.26 a myſtery revealed, not devited *Nullo humano ingenio penetrabile, aut inacceſſible*, &c. Dav. in Col.

3. If we ſpeak of the *formes* and *words* only, which the Holy *Ghoſt* makes uſe of in *Scripture* (and not of the *things* themſelves) there *be*, and none of *ſober* judgement ever *denyed* it, ſome particular *paſſages* very *dark*, and *hard* to be underſtood, as *Peter* affirmes concerning the Epiſtles of *Paul*, 2 *Pet.*3.16. *So* the unqueſtionable wiſdome of *God* would *have* it, 1. To keep *under* the ſpirit of *man*, apt to be *puft up* * with *knowledge*, and to be *exalted above meaſure with abundance of revelations* *. 2. To ſtirre us up to the more *reverence* and *diligence* in the

* 1 Cor.8.7.
* 2 Cor.12 7.

ſearch

ſearch and *ſtudy* of them. 3. And alſo to make us acknowledge *God*, and *ſeeke* to him for the right underſtanding of them. 4. *God* would not have *all* to be alike *privy* to his *counſell*, hath *ſome* ſecrets and *myſteries* of his *Kingdome*, which he would have *ſome* to *know*, (therefore they are *diſcovered*) but *not all*, and therefore they are but *darkly* diſcovered, and as it were in a *riddle*, *Mat.*13.10,11.&c. But ſtill this is *our inſufficiency*, *not* the *Scriptures* deficiencie. Continuance of *time*, difference and *antiquation* of *cuſtomes*, *ignorance* of *times* and *things* to which they referre, diverſity of *language*, &c. make many things *obſcure*, that *els* were *plaine* and *eaſy*. And yet in things of chiefeſt *concernment*, the *darkeſt* and moſt *difficult* places are *illuſtrated* by others that are more *eaſy* to be underſtood.

4. There is (notwithſtanding) a *Rule* of *faith* and *manners* (yea of *Worſhip* & *Government* too, as to the *materials* in both) ſo *clear* and *evident* in the Scriptures, that who ſo *runs* may *read* it, with the ordinary aſſiſtance of the holy *Spirit*, (without *which*, we can doe nothing.) The *Scriptures* are a *light* and *lamp*, a * *marvailous light*, were *written for our learning*, are apt to *teach* even the *ſimple*, &c. were *known* of *Timothy* of a very *child* * ; were *written that we might beleeve*, and *beleeving* might have *life*, &c. and therefore not ſo very *obſcure*.

* 1 Pet.1.9.
* 2 Tim.3 16. ἀπὸ βρέφους, of a *child* or *Infant*.

5. The *ſtile* and *phraſe* of holy Scriptures, is ſo attempered, and *conforme to Reaſon*, that even *Naturall* men, with meer naturall *improvements*, may underſtand the *literall* and *grammaticall* ſence; becauſe *God* ſpake by the *Prophets* and *Apoſtles* in *languages* well *known* and *underſtood*; and delivered *things tranſcending* naturall capacitie, in *formes* and *phraſes* agreeable thereunto, and that were ordinarily *received* amongſt men.

6. And as for *Commentaries*, *Expoſitions*, *preaching*, &c. *They* are not alwayes to *cleare* that which is *difficult*, but to *dilate* and *preſſe* that which is *cleare*. Nor ſerve they at all to *cleare* the *Scriptures*, but to cleare up our *apprehenſions* and *underſtanding* of the Scriptures; not to *glaze* them with a *foraigne* and *made light*, but to *ſhew* them by their *owne* light, and in their *proper* colours *. As the Levites, *Neh.*8.7. *cauſed the people to underſtand the reading*. Wheras, if they were *obſcure* in *themſelves*, the *credit* and ſufficiencie of the *Interpreters*, ſhould give the prin-

* *Theſe* do not, ſhould not, *afferre ſenſum alienum, ſed referre proprium.*

cipall

cipall *Authority* to the *Interpretations* †. (As for *example*, the place above mentioned, *Deut.*30.12. *the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth*, &c. according to the *Apoſtles* ſence of this (*Rom.*10.5.) the *place* it ſelf is very *obſcure:* and therefore the authority of the *Apoſtle* gives *credit* to his *Interpretation.*) But ſo doe not *we*, in our expoſitions, not *make* or *urge* any *ſence* in our *owne* name, but only make out the naturall ſence of the Scripture, and cauſe it to *appeare*, by the uſe of thoſe *helps* and *meanes* which *God* himſelfe hath *appointed*, and the beſt Expoſitors of Scripture *exampled*. *Firſt*, Prayer, *Then*, conſideration of the *ſcope*, drift and *end:* (as *Paul* in ſeverall caſes, 1 *Cor.*9.9,10. *Heb* 9.1. to 8. *the holy Ghoſt thus ſignifying*, &c.) which *ſcope* is ſometimes *expreſſed*, *Joh.*20.31. ſometime left for us to *gather*. *Thirdly*, obſervation and *diſtinction* of *expreſſions proper* from *figurative*. *I will be to them as a Lyon* *, *I will be to them for a* **God*. There's a difference. *This is my Commandement*, and *This is my body*, &c. 4. *Regard* to the *Context*, antecedents and conſequents. 5. Weighing *circumſtances* well, of *perſons*, *place*, *time*, Agree *theſe*, and clear the *Scriptures*. Acquaintance with the *Hiſtory* and *Cuſtomes* of the *Times* wherein they were penned, &c. *Skill* in the *languages* in which they were *originally* written, is of excellent uſe. 7. *Conference* of *places*, Scripture with Scripture, *phraſe* with *phraſe*. For *Scripture is the beſt interpretour of it ſelf* *: *Paul* is much in this; compare, *Heb.*3.7, 11,15,17. with *chap.*4.4,5.——9. yee ſhall ſee he makes out the *ſence* of *Pſal.*95.7. by *comparing* it with *other* Scriptures. That's but *one*: you'l finde *many* more. And tis an *excellent* way; for *much exerciſe* in the word acquaints us with the *phraſe*, *dialect* and *method* of the Holy *Ghoſt*, and inſenſibly begets an *habit* of *diſcerning* truth and errour, *good and evill*, *Heb.*5.14. (8.) A ſetled *ſtedfaſtnes* of ſpirit and *judgement* is alſo a great advantage. The *unſtable* as well as the *unlearn'd* ſooner *wreſt* than *reach* the *ſenſe* of the *Scriptures*, 2 *Pet.*3.16. The *Foundations* in *Religion*

† *Quia tunc mutua textus & commentariorum, verborum & ſenſus relatio non appareret.* Camer. de Controv. Jud. c.10. And this is that the *Papiſts* contend for, that the Scriptures might be accounted obſcure, and the *Popes* ſence of them (though never ſo remote from common ſence) received as the only *rule* of Faith, &c.

* Hoſ.5.14. * Jer.31.33. So *Amos* 3 8. The *Lion* hath roared; the *Lord God* hath ſpoken. The literall muſt not be taken in a figurative ſence, nor *contrà, Apices juris non ſunt jus.* And yet all, *de jure*: and not a title muſt fall. *Mat.*5.18.

* Hence, *Bonus Textualis, bonus Theologus.*

ligion (otherwiſe calld the *Apoſtles doctrine**, and *The foundation of the Apoſtles, and Prophets**, *Forme of ſound words* †, *Analogy of Faith* †, *The principles of the doctrine of Chriſt**, *&c.*) theſe are laid downe *clearly* in the *Scriptures*; who ſo *runs* may *read* them. Now *ſtedfaſtnes* in *theſe* adapts and *diſpoſeth* the ſoule to a *reception* of the *reſt*; (as it is in all *Arts* and *knowledges.*) *If ye continue in my word, ſaith* our Saviour, *ye ſhall be my diſciples indeed,* ἀληθῶς μαθηταί μου, *my Scholars, truly* & *effectively*, not *learners ſimply*, but throughly *learned.* 2. *Humility, diligence, feare* of *God*, and (in ſhort) conſcientious *improvement* of what we *know*, is the *highway* to *more* knowledge and *better* underſtanding in the *Scriptures.* This brings us under the *promiſe*, *Pſal.*25.9. *&c. The meeke will he teach his way. The ſecret of the Lord is with them that feare him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant* (or, *and his Covenant, to make them know it*) v.14. And *if any man will do his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine whether it be of God*, *Joh.*7.17. (10) Laſtly, eſpeciall *dependance* upon *Chriſt*, the great *Prophet* of his *Church* (the *Interpreter one of a thouſand**) in the humble diligent uſe of all the *meanes* aforeſaid, *crownes* and *ſpiriteth* all the reſt; for when all is done, ther's *nothing* can open the eye of the ſoule to *diſcerne* and *penetrate* into the ſpirituall *depths* of the *Scriptures*, but that bleſſed *Spirit* which *endited* them. *And they ſhall be all taught of God: He that abideth in me and I in him, the ſame brings forth much fruit* (Joh.15.4. fruit of *doctrine* he ſpeaks of, not of practice *only*, ſee *verſe* 15,16.) *but ſever'd from me yee can doe nothing, verſe.*5. And *to every one is given grace according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt*, *Eph.*4.7. *Whether Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Paſtors*, or *teachers*, (ordinarily gifted and commmiſſioned, or extraordinary) it is *Chriſt* that *gives*, fit's and furniſheth them out, *all*; *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry*, &c. And therefore much acquaintance with *him* muſt needs take place of all the reſt; *who* by *experience* hath made his *Church* to know, that much *faith, prayer, humility*, and *walking* with *God*, have enabled *ordinary* parts and but *meane* improvements of *learning*, to know and declare *more* of the *counſell* of *God*, than the accompliſhments of *Nature* and *Art* could ever raiſe

* Acts 2.42.
* Eph.2.20.
† 2 Tim.1.13.
† Rom.12.6.
* Heb.6.1.
* Job 33.23.

others

others to, that *rested* in them. By *these helps* and meanes the Scriptures are *interpreted*, and manifested in their *owne* light.

7 *An.* That cannot be justly calld *Obscure* which *ordinary meanes* (such as are Commentaries and expositions) may *cleare*; but such things *rather*, as by ordinary meanes *cannot* be cleared. Is the *print* the *obscurer* because I cannot read without *spectacles*? It rather argues a *good* print, if *legible*, (to a bad sight) *with* them. Who ever complained of his *ground* as *unfruitfull*, because it yeelds not a *crop* of *bread*, ready and fit for *eating*? Or of a *ship* at *Sea*, that tis very *hard* to be *governd* and guided, because he cannot manage it with a *bridle* or drive it with a *whip*? Nothing sure, is chargable with *defect* which by use of ordinary meanes comes to good *effect*. Now *Commentaries* are but *ordinary meanes* to understand *writings*. Yea, and amongst *humane* Authours, *Commentaries* * have been *super-commented* over and over, and yet the first *Author* not accounted so very *obscure* neither.

* As *Porpheries* upon some parts of *Aristotle*, by many. *Cajetan, Soto, Averroes* --- And tis so in all Faculties.

8. *Varietie* in *expositions* of Scripture, is a great *advantage* to the *Truth*; by manifestation of a sweet *consent* between the *Spirit* speaking in the *Scriptures*, and the same *Spirit* in the hearts of *Gods messengers*; for *preaching*, and *expositions* are but (as it were) *reports** ex officio, of the several *apprehensions* which *God* by his *spirit* hath *formed* in their heart concerning his blessed *will* revealed in his *word*.

* Isa. 53 1.

——*But* say yee, *they agree not one with another. An.* Although in *some* things they may *differ*, yet where the *Spirit* of God *assists* they all *agree* in the *substance*; yea and often times even their *differences* contribute *something* towards *manifestation* of *Truth*: as *Glasses* of different magnitudes, disposed in severall parts of a *roome*, may represent one and the same object in severall *figures*, and yet the *manifestation* of that object may be *more full* by that *variety*, than by any *single* reflexion, though never so *true*. *According to the diversity of gifts* saith the Apostle*, *and the measure* or degrees *of manifestation of the same Spirit given to every man to profit with*, *To one is given the Word of Wisdome, to another a word of knowledge, to another Faith*, to *another Prophecye*, &c. *But all these worketh that one*

* 1 Cor. 12 4, 5, &c to 13.

* Eph 4.5.6, &c. to 14.

and the ſelfe ſame Spirit of Chriſt*, For the *perfecting of the Saints, worke of the Miniſtry, edifying of the body of Chriſt. Till we all (the whole Church) come unto Unity of Faith and knowledge* &c, unto *a perfect Man*, &c. So that this *diverſity* is derived *from*, conſiſts *with*, tends *to*, and center's *in* Unity and *Perfection*. As ſeverall *parts* or notes in *Muſick* that conſtitute and perfect (as it were) one *body* of *Harmony* although it may be never a two of them be *commenſurate* or exactly *like* one another. And if *malice* or *frowardneſſe* would ſuffer them, they might eaſily *ſtop* their owne *mouths* (when wideſt open againſt *differences* of godly men, in *expounding* or interpreting *Scripture*) with a ſerious and modeſt *conſideration* of the diverſified *reports* which the unſearchable wiſdome of *God* choſe to make, of the very hiſtory of the *Goſpell*, by the foure *Evangeliſts*, *all* of them, even in that their *diverſitie*, acted, and *inſpired* by the ſame *Spirit*.

* Περὶ τὴν κατάρτισιν τῶν ἁγίων: — No phrase translated with more difference, and leſſe *materiall*: For the *gathering, uniting, knitting* together (as bones *ſet*) of the Saints. 2. For the *conſummation* or *perfecting*. 3. For the *Inſtauration* or *repayring*. 4. For the *ſetling* or *eſtabliſhment* of the Saints. The *account* of all is, A well proportioned *compleatneſſe* of the Church is a great *End*, to which *Chriſt* hath ſub-ordain'd all *gifts* and *Offices* in the *Church*. And therefore they that make *fractures* and nouriſh *ſeparations* and *diſorders* in the Church doe abſolutely *oppoſe* the End of *Chriſt* in all his Ordinances.

And *therefore* let us rightly informe our ſelves concerning this *charge*, of *obſcurity* and *difficulty*, layd upon the *Scriptures* in generall, as a meer *Device* and *ſubtilety* of the *Devill*, to ſlight and *weaken* the *Authority* of the *truth*, and of the ſtanding *Rule* and law thereof, thereby to carry on his owne *Intereſt*. Which in all things ſtands in *Privation*, or *Contradiction* to the things of *God*. And that's the true *Reaſon* why *Satan* makes uſe of *any* formes or *Inſtruments* (be they never ſo *oppoſit* among themſelves) againſt *God* and *Truth*, *Becauſe* what ever *Gods* Intereſt is *not*, the *Devils is**. And accordingly our *Saviour* ſaith, *He that is not with me is againſt me*, *Mat.* 12.30. It is all one to *Satan*, therefore, *what* they be, ſo they be *not* for and with *Ieſus Chriſt*.

* *Grifiuti di Dio ſono gli acquiſti del Diavolo*, Malvezzi *Dav. Perſeguit.*

Thus

THus the word of God is *directly* made of none effect *Univerſally*, and in *whole*: In *part*, the ſame is performed, when Satan by his Inſtruments practiſeth in like manner upon any *particular part* of the *Word*; thereby to credit or advance *Evill*, and worke miſchiefe againſt the *Truth* of *Chriſt*, or ſoules of *men*. We ſhall not *dwell* upon this: But *this* was the *ſtratagem* with which he *began*, and his *ſucceſſe* therein was *infinite*. The whole *world* is full of the ſad *monuments* thereof.——**Yea, hath God ſaid ye ſhall not eate of every tree of the Garden?* But *God he knowes that in the day yee eate thereof, your eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as gods knowing good and evill.* How powerfully he workes with all deceivableneſſe! being *perfect* Saints, he *knew nothing* would take with *them* but *light* and *glory*, higheſt and full *conformity* to the Nature and Perfection of *God*. *This* ſhall be the *baite* therefore over which he will ſpread his *net*,——*ye ſhall be like God*, &c. But ſtill the *Word* is in his *way*, and he knowes theſe *birds* of *Paradiſe* will not fly *over* it (*In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die.*) He begins with this *Word* therefore, and makes a *hole* in that *fence* for them to *creep out* at.---*Yea, hath God ſaid ye ſhall not eat*, &c. *come, ye ſhall not die at all*, &c. makes them beleeve they were *miſtaken* in the *Word*: * that it was not intended to *confine* their liberty and *freedome* of the Garden, nor yet to *exclude* them from ſo great a *bliſſe* as *life* by *eating*, or of being *like* unto *God*, by *not* eating.-- That it was only an *expedient* to *try* their *wiſdome* and *reſolution*, not any *injunction* of an abſolute *Duty*; a *device* to *whet* their *appetite* with apprehenſion of *danger*, and to *gratifie* and *greaten* their *enjoyment* of ſo divine a privilege (as he promiſed them by eating) with *beguiling* their *feares*, &c. *But ye ſhall not dye at all: For God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, your eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods*, &c. So he *falſifies* and *fruſtrates* the Authority of the *Word*, puts *by* all their thoughts of *that*, makes way for them *through* the *Word*, to the *bayt* he had made and *ſet*, and then drawes his *net* over them, &c.

* Gen. 3. 2.

* There were many other deceits wrought together in this practice upon our firſt Parents, but this is under obſervation here, his making the word of none effect.

Nor is this practice of Satan to be *ſlighted*, for upon due *ſearch*

it will be *found* that the *generality* of carnall people that live under the ſound of the *Goſpell* are *taken* in this *ſnare*; yea, and that moſt of the falls of *Gods* owne people are upon this very * *catch*. For *what* is it (in one or other) that *keeps* the *ſoule* from anſwering and *obeying* the voice of *God* in his *Word*? (be it in any *precept*, promiſe, diſcovery, &c?) *Not* an abſolute and expreſſe *denyall* or *refuſall* of the whole *Word*, in the *Judgment*. Such *monſters* are more *ſeldome* ſeen, that would ſay, *It is not the word of God, or though it be, yet we will not heare it nor doe it.* But the more ordinary *evaſion* is, *It is not intended as you apply it*, nor *meant* as *you underſtand* it; not for *this end*, nor that *purpoſe*, * &c. If an expreſſe *command*, --- *Oh* ſay they (in their hearts at leaſt,) it is but *good counſell commended*, but a *tryall propounded*, or a *privilege* granted and *divulged*. If a flat *prohibition* of any thing as evill — *it were not amiſſe to forbeare it.* If a *duty* enjoyned —— *we have good leave and liberty to doe it*, and *it would be done to doe well*: *Much is required that we may doe a little*, &c. Or if a *threatning*, then *Oh, but God is more merciſull*, and *will be better than his word*; *ſhewes but what we deſerve* (as when he threatned *Nineveh*) and *ſayes it to put us in feare*; *but we hope he will not doe it*; *will be favourable to me*, &c. And if a *Promiſe*, never ſo plainly and clearly urged, then *Satan* ſuggeſts (in other perſons, otherwiſe.) *Oh but there may be ſome latent reſervation*, or *myſticall meaning in it*: Or, *It may be made good to ſome, to whom it belongs, but not to me*, &c. ——— We need not ſtay longer upon *this*, beſides our experience of *others*; Every ones *owne heart* can witneſſe, how apt we are to *breake* the *force*, and *elude* the *Authority* of the *word*, thereby to make elbow-roome for *corruption* and *unbeliefe*, to ſhift off *Duty*, and favour our ſelves in our *ſinnes*. In all which our corrupt *nature* is but managed by *Satan* againſt *Jeſus Chriſt*, his *Spirit* and *Word*, and the true *Concernment of our ſoules*.

* *Decipulum.*

* Thus the plain & cleare Scriptures are ſhifted off, that are for *puniſhing* of *Blaſphemers* and *enticers to Idolatry*, for *not worſhipping of Images*, for *unity in judgment* and *Doctrine*, for *obedience to Magiſtrats*, for the *office* and *maintenance* of *Miniſters*, &c. by ſeverall ſorts of men; every one adhering to that which he moſt fancieth and affecteth.

THus *Directly*, the word of God is made of none effect, both *in whole*, and *in part*. It is alſo done *Indirectly*; and that two wayes:

1. When *other things* are *ſet up* in *Authority* above, or equall with the *Scriptures*.

2. When

2. When though *no* counter-Authority be *ſet up* (nor the Scriptures otherwiſe ſlighted or ſlandered) yet their Authority is not *actually obeyed*.

1. There be *divers* things which *Satan* by ſeverall Inſtruments (as he ſees them likly eſt to take with ſeverall *Times*, and ſorts of *people*) hath been practiſing to *ſet up* in Authority *above*, or at leaſt in equipage *with* the holy *Scriptures*: thereby to *eclipſe* their *glory*, and *weaken* their *efficacie*; as alſo to *divert* and *intercept* the *reverence* and *reſpects* of men. 1. Unwritten *Traditions*. 2. The Authority of the *Church*. 3. Generall *Counſels*. 4. Authority of ſome *particular men* (either as annexed to their *Office*, as *Popes*, *Patriarcks*, *Prelats*, &c. or as conferr'd *extraordinarily* and immediately upon their *Perſons*, as the *Fathers*, &c.) 5. *Vulger* carnall *principles* and opinions of the *World*. 6. Received *Maximes* and *Poſitions* in *Philoſophy*. 7. Naturall *Reaſon*. 8. *Revelations*.

More might be added, but *theſe* are the *chiefeſt*, and, I thinke, *comprehenſive* of the *reſt* of his *devices*, ſet up to check and *make* the *Scriptures*. And indeed, as to *Satan*, it *matters not* greatly *what* it be that is ſo *ſet up*, ſo it be not *Truth*. Let it be *Barabbas*, or whom ye will, ſo it be not *Jeſus*. As they that would ſet up a *counterfeit*-Prince, to diſturb and unſettle him that Governes, *care not who* or *what* he be ſo he be but for their *turne*; for they ayme not to *prefer* the *Impoſter*, but to *diſturbe* and oppoſe the *poſſeſſor*. So with the *Devill*, it matters not whether it be *Popery*, *Turciſme*, *Paganiſme*, *Judaiſme*, *Familiſme*, *Atheiſme*, &c. *any*, or *all*, that takes place, ſo they conduce ſufficiently to his *ends*, and *throughly* oppoſe *God* and *Truth* *.

* The *God* of *heaven* is a *jealous* God, and ſtrict of his ſervice; but the *Devill* is *indifferent* to every thing, but only to *inſtrument* his *malice* againſt *God* and *Truth*.

The foure firſt of theſe may be thought peculiar to *Papiſts*: for *they* make a great *ſtirre* with their *Traditions*, *Church*, *Counſell*, *Popes*, &c. whoſe *chaire* they pretend to have mounted like *Tripus* * upon the *three* former, as upon ſo many *feet*, (which notwithſtanding, would *fall* to the ground, were it not *otherwiſe* more ſtrongly *ſupported*) making a meere *ſtale* of the *Scriptures*, to *diſguiſe* and *inſtrument* their Antichriſtian *Intereſt*. Theſe their greateſt *pretences* are abundantly *anſwered* and *confuted*, by ſundry able *writers* in our *Engliſh* tongue (as well as in other lan-

* That ſo his decrees might be taken for Oracles, & *velut ex tripode dicta*.

languages:) and it would be *better* with us than it *is*, if their *writings* were more in *requeſt*, (were more read and ſtudyed) then they *be*. For *ſo* we might *diſcerne* and *oppoſe* the *Romiſh principles* and *Intereſt*, whereſoever we find them, and in *whomſoever*: whereas *now* many are *drawn in* to the *ſame things* (held out by *other perſons*, and dreſt up in *other formes* and faſhions) which they have alwayes *profeſſed* to *deteſt* in *Papiſts*.

But the *Papiſts* are *not* carryed on *alone* in theſe pretences by the *Prince* of *Darkneſſe*: For whereſoever *Ignorance* (the black *rod* of his *ſtrength*) prevailes, as in the poore dark Churches of *Greeks*, *Armenians*, *Georgians*, *Moſcovites*, *&c.* though they be far from *Rome*, againſt the *Pope*, and owne the *Scripture*, yet *their Traditions*, *cuſtomes*, *Patriarches*, *&c.* are ſet up and maintayn'd (reſpectively) in *Authority* farre *above* the *Scriptures*. But what need we go ſo *farre* for *inſtances*, having too many here at *home*? common *carnall Proteſtants* I meane, who though they owne the Scriptures in *profeſſion*, yet *mate* and *overtop* them with their *by-authorities*. Let any impartiall man be judge, whether the Name & Title of a *King* hath not bin of *more Authority* with *ſome*, than the great and revered Name of *God*: and if the edicts and *Proclamations* of a mortall *man* have not *more* ſwayed them (even in matters of *Religion**) than the expreſſe *Commands* of Gods *word* (*one* reaſon, amongſt *others*, on *Gods* part no doubt, why it is with us as it *is*.) Nay it is moſt *evident*, that ſome certaine ſuperſtitious *cuſtomes*, eſpiſcopall *Canons* and *Injunctions*, the old *Lirurgy* of the *Common-Prayer-book*, &c. are ſtill of *more weight* and force with *many*, than the plaineſt *precepts* of *Chriſt* in his *Goſpell*. Our *ground* is *this*, *Thoſe* are ſtill retained and *obſerved* notwithſtanding the *Ordinances* of *Men* to the contrary: whereas the *Commands* of *Chriſt* are *neglected* and *deſpiſed* dayly by them, without any *viſible* ſigne of Reluctancie.

* As concerning the Sabbath.

And *they* likewiſe are within diſtance of the *ſame* charge, who (whether *ſluggiſhly* or *ſlaviſhly*) neglecting their duties, & *denying* their *owne* judgements, *build* and reſt themſelves *wholly* upon the *Judgements* of *other* men (be they never ſo *able* and *faithfull*) in the *things* of *God*. For though to do *well*, we ſhould *beleeve as* the *ableſt* and *moſt judicious* Chriſtians *do*, yet not *becauſe* they

doe.

doe. The *faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, should not be had* and held *with respect of persons** : but it should be with *every* beleever, as with those of *Samaria*, Ioh. 4.42. *Now we beleeve, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*

* Jam. 2 1.

And are not *they* then *manifest* instruments of this *practice* of the Devill (of weakning and disauthorising the Scriptures with indirect and by-Authorities) who *choose* and *follow grievous wolves* (as the holy Ghost cals them *) and *men that speake perverse* † *things to draw* * *away Disciples after them?* Acts 20.30. Such as *have* been and *are* now adayes, many: *some* in *ordinary*; Erratick Stars or Planets as the Spirit cals them*, (of irregular *motions* and violent *influence*) that are unfixed, keep not exactly the *path* of the *Sun*, nor their mutuall *aspects* one to another; and *raging waves of the Sea*, violently acted by *turbulent* spirits or *tempestuous* blasts, and not flowing with a *naturall* course from any *certain* proper *springs* or *fountaines*: And some againe are *extraordinary*, like prodigious *meteors*, appearing now and then to affright the world, as *effects* and ominous *tokens* of *Gods* displeasure; such as *Hacket*, *John* of *Leyden*, &c. and long afore them *Montanus*, counterfeit *Messiah's*, *Judas* of *Galilee*, *Theudas*, &c. But in *our* times, and amongst us, *English*, we have had notorious *variety* of both sorts, now of late. Some (persons) lookt at as the *witnesses* first *prophecying*, then *slain*, &c. Others, as divinely *inspired*, above the *Apostles* in light and understanding: and other some, as *equall* with, yea (and if report be true) *Mahomet* like, as *above Christ* himselfe. Insomuch that we have now relieved *Ægypt* and *Africa* of that infamous burden which the world laid upon them of *old* for variety of *monsters* (in Religion, manners, and brute creatures) and weare it our selves. *Semper Anglia novi aliquid apportat monstri*, for so it hath been of *late*, more wayes than *one*.

* Acts 20.30.
† Διαστρεφοντα, Wrested and distort things.
* Ἀποσπαν, to draw *forcibly*, so as to sever and pull one part from another: it is the word whereby they signifie castration. And accordingly this practice doth oft weaken and *emasculate* those Churches out of which such Disciples are drawn.
* Jude 13.

But as to *Religion*, what *wonder*? when as *Christ* himselfe *foretold* the very *same* things that *are* come to passe, and yet farther *may*; that there should be *false Prophets* and *Teachers*, that should *distract* the world, and set them a *running to and fro* after

ſtrange *novelties* —— that ſhould ſay, *I am* —— and *the time draweth near*, Luke 21.8. And the *people* ſhould *take* it as *madly*, and *run out* ſeverall wayes after the name of a Chriſt —— *they* ſhall ſay, *Loe, here he is* —— or, *Loe, he is there* —— Behold he is *in the deſart*, ſayes *one* ſort, —— nay, he is in the *ſecret chambers*, ſay *another* (ſee *his owne* words, *Mat.* 24. 23—26. and *Mar.* 13. 6, 21. *Luke* 17.23.) The perfect *picture* of our *poſture*, as if it had been intended our antedated *Hiſtory*. And *obſerve* (good Chriſtian) how the *Lord* repreſents it: He deſcribes the *motion* and *buſtle* to be (and accordingly we find it) *ſuch*, as if indeed *Chriſt* and his *truth* were utterly *loſt*, and as much to *ſeek* as if he had *never* been *known*, or heard of in the world *before*. —They ſhall ſay, *here he is*, and others, *there he is*, &c. But ſaith he, *goe not after them, beleeve them not*. —Not? why for certain they deliver very *high* and *heavenly* things, ſuch as would *raviſh* any *Saint* alive almoſt to *heare* them. —— Yea ſaith *Chriſt*, ſo they *ſhall*; and their words ſhall be ſo taking with the very *people* of *God*, and ſo *likely* to be the very *truth* of God, that if *Gods* eternall *decree* had not faſt *hold* of them, they would even *ſeduce* and carry away the very *Elect*. —— Yea, but they have *extraordinary aſſiſtance*, and doe *ſtrange* things, ſpeake with Authority, and worke *ſignes* (they ſay) too, ſtrange *wonders*, and miracles, &c. —— If they doe not, yet they *may*, and *ſhall* when the time is come, ſaith our Saviour, —*They ſhall ſhew great ſignes and wonders* *. And they ſhall come with *all power, ſignes, and lying wonders*, and *with all deceivableneſſe of unrighteouſneſſe* *. —But *what* ſhall we *doe* in this caſe, when ſo many are acted with a zeale of *ſeeking* out *Chriſt* and his *Truth*? We *know not* what to doe. *Anſw.* Why *this* doe; *ſticke* cloſe to your *principles*, and budge not a foot from the *Truth*. *Goe not forth after them* (act not with them) nay, if they come *to* you, *beleeve them not*, (thinke not with them) doe not *approve* them —— Not goe *forth*? where ſhould we *ſtay* and *abide*, when *all Religion* that was formerly received is called in *queſtion*, and *proteſted* againſt and *condemned* by many? Abide *where* Chriſt *left* us, and where his *Apoſtles* left us: and if we have *run out* after any thing that is *forreign* from *that*, lets *retire* and draw in againe (as faſt as we can)

* Mat. 24. 24.
* 2 Theſ. 2 9, 10.

can) to that good old *mansion* of *Christ* and *Truth*, the holy *Scriptures:* And keep we *there*; & if any man (whosoever he be, and upon what ever pretence) preach or hold (u any other Christ or Gospell than what we find there, let him be *accursed**. And let every *Christian* soule be jealous of all *new* and formerly unheard of *mansions* of *Christ* and *Truth*. *Christ* would have us beware of *Two*, especially the *Desart* and the *Conclave*. The *wilderneſſe* of unbounded Universality of *all Religions*, And the *Conclave* of *Popery*, and unwarrantable *separation* and *retiredneſſe* in *any* Religion. In the *wilderneſſe*, Truth will be *loſt*, in the *Conclave* it will be *impriſoned* and *empoyſoned*; and the pretences of a Christ are groundleſſe in *both*. There is a dangerous diſpoſition in the ſoule (even of good men) to bee taken with theſe *Impoſtures*. *If another come in his owne Name, him ye will receive, John* 5.43. And therefore our deare *Saviour* fortifies his *Caution, Behold, I have told you before*. And the holy *Ghoſt* gives warning thereof, in *many other* expreſſe *Scriptures* beſides.

And as for the *firſt thing* mentioned, *vulgar carnall principles* of the *world*, they are without queſtion of ſuch commanding *influence* upon the *opinions* and *ways* of men, that let the *ſtreame* (of the Word) *run* as it will, and the *wind* (of the ſpirit) *blow* where it *liſteth*, yet by theſe Satan trims their *ſayles*, and (as by *helme* and *rudder*) *ſteeres* their *courſe*, as he thinks good, towards *Hell* and deſtruction. I ſpeake not here of inward principles of corrupt Nature as *ſeated* in the heart: but of their *effects* and *improvements*, in extrinſecall and *traditionall* principles, prophane vulgar *proverbs*, *ſentences*, and *common ſayings* of the *common ſort*, concerning *Religion:* Which are of that *Authority* among them, that (like the *Reſponſa prudentium** among the *Romans*) ther's no receding from them, without a *note* of *infamy* from the world. Other *engins* the *Devill* hath of far more *ſubtle* device and compoſure; but ſurely none more *inſtrumentall* to his *ends*, or *accommodate* to his *practice*, againſt the *Goſpell* of *Christ* and *ſoules* of *men*, than thoſe *vulgar* courſe *rudiments* of the world, concerning *Religion*. For

* Gal. 1 7. Principiis *innatis* accedunt principia *adnata* & *infuſa*.

* *Quorum omnium ſententiæ & opiniones tã auctoritatem tenebant, ut Judici recedere à reſponſo eorum non liceret*, &c. *Accurſ.* gloſ. ad *Inſt. Imp.*

1. They are very *oppoſite* to the free *courſe*, *glory*, and very *being* of the *Goſpell* and all true *Religion*, Rom. 8.7. Mark. 7.8. 1 Cor. 2.8,9,14. As (for example) thoſe of old; *The fathers have*

eaten ſowre grapes, and the childrens teeth are ſet on edge, (Ezek. 18.2,3.) And, *the dayes are prolonged, and every viſion fayleth,* Ez. 12.22. Alſo, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* And, *when Chriſt commeth no man knoweth whence he is.—Shall Chriſt come out of Galilee? — Thou beareſt record of thy ſelfe, thy record is not true.—We be Abrahams ſeed and were never in bondage.—We are Moſes diſciples — That the Diſciples of Jeſus came by night and ſtole him away out of his ſepulchre*—That the *kingdome* of *Meſſiah* ſhould be a *temporal* kingdome, &c. and for *practicall* things, *skin for skin, and all that ever a man hath will he give for his life. Let us eat and drinke, for to morrow we ſhall dye,* &c. Theſe, and the like, were in *faſhion* then: and we have thoſe with us that are *as bad*, or worſe.

2. They are *abſurd*, many of them, having no ground, neither in *Religion*, nor yet in naturall *Reaſon*: but have their *birth* and *growth* from vaine *opinion* and *tradition*, and are of a *temper*, ſome of them, between *humour* and *ſerious*, *jeſt* and *earneſt*, ridiculous, &c. ſo that with *ſolid arguments* ye can ſcarce tell where to *find* them, or how to *deale* with them. For in ſtead of *reaſon*, men (ſo principled) uſually returne *wrangling*, *obſtinacie* and *ſcorne*. And, however the *wiſdome* of ſome *other* Nations is *ſought* for in their common ſentences, and *proverbs*, yet a great deale of *folly* and *wickedneſſe* is to be *found* in *ours*: *ſo* much, that they are very *hard* to be *removed*, and *difficult* to be *dealt* with.

3. *Untractable* as thoſe *thornes* and *bryars** be, yet till *they be ſtubb'd up, there is no plowing, ſowing or planting*, to any purpoſe, in *Gods husbandry*; for your *thorns* will choake up all. *Chriſt* would have his *way* ſomewhat levell'd. The *Law*, *Prophets*, and *John* eſpecially, prepared his way to the *Jewes*: *Civility* and *Arts* (are obſerv'd * to) *uſher* the *Goſpell* all along with the *Gentiles*. *Rudeneſſe* and *barbariſme* (of which many of theſe vulgar *receits* hold in *chiefe*) keep men in a kind of *double incapacitie* to receive true *Religion*: (which is a ſupernaturall *improvement* of *Reaſon* above and *beyond Reaſon*; and is taught in ſuch formes and phraſes as *Barbariſme* receives not.) The *naturall man* receives not the things of the *ſpirit*; but the *rude* and *ſalvage* receive no not the things of the *letter*. Therefore *Paul*, that the *Goſpell* might *run and be glorified*, requires a *contribution* of *Prayers*, that he (and the reſt) might be delivered from *abſurd*

* Iſa. 7.25. Ezek. 2.6, &c. The curſe of the Earth, and ſuch as *Gods* husbandmen muſt looke to be troubled with.

* M. G. Herbert in his Prophetick Poem, The *Ch: militant.*

* 2 Theſ. 3.2. Ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτόπων καὶ πονηρῶν, Men of no *Topicks* or *Place*, in *Reaſon* nor *Religion*: ye cannot tell where to have

4. As *choaking* and *troubleſome* as they are, they are yet very *much neglected* and *ſlighted* even by *Gods husbandmen*: and *therefore* are ſeen ofttimes to *abound* even under very *painfull* and *ſpirituall* preaching. For if there be a few *godly* or *ingenuous* in a *Congregation*, the godly Miniſter chiefly applyes to *them*, (and its expected he ſhould.) But this *grubbing up* of *thornes* and *bryars* is *heavy* and tough *worke* *: one of the moſt *unpleaſant* and baſeſt imploiments belonging to *Husbandry*. The *moſt* thinke it *beneath* them, *few* or none *delight* in it. They know they muſt encounter with a great deale of *vanity* and *obſtinacy*, *confidence* and *frowardneſſe*, *abſurdity* and *ignorance*, wilfull, and (in a manner) invincible. (For the *Foole rageth and is confident* *, being wiſer in his owne conceit than ſeven men that can render a Reaſon †.) And therefore his *counſell is eaſily taken*, as to this, *Reprove not a ſcorner leſt he hate thee*, &c. Pro. 9. 8. and *ſpeake not in the eares of a Foole, for he will deſpiſe the wiſdome of thy words*, Prov. 23. 9.

* Work for the *mattock*, not the *plow*: neither *orderly*, nor *eaſie*, but lies on a mans *owne* skill, care and ſtrength, &c. Iſa. 7. 25.

* Prov. 14. 16.

† *He that reproveth a ſcorner gets to himſelfe ſhame; and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himſelfe a blot*, Pro. 9. 7.

5. They are very *Imperious* (ſuch vulgar principles) where they take *place*, in *all* caſes, whether *Religious* or *Civill*. Firſt becauſe of their *corruptnes*, which *alone* ſeemes to preferre *ſome* things, to a kind of *dominion* and tyranny over man. Secondly becauſe they *deſcend* (for the moſt part) from our *progenitors*, and ſo are as it were propagated with mens *Natures*, and with a kind of *Authority*: And this is of great moment with many. The *Ruſſe* will tell you, his *fathers* afore him *uſed* nothing but an *axe* (in building their Houſes or Boats) and therefore *God* and the *Emperour* forbid he ſhould offer to uſe a *Saw*. Thirdly, They have much in them of the nature of a *Civill Law*, whoſe proper *foundation* is in the *ſuffrages* and *conſent* of the *Generality*: and whatſoever has *that* is reputed *Lex non ſcripta**, A *Law* in *value*, though not in *forme* and *impreſſion*. Now here is *conſent enough* in theſe prophane *principles*; which are indeed but ſome *confuſed* traditionall *Articles* of the great *agreement* of the *People* againſt *God* and *Truth*.

* Nam cum ipſæ leges nulla alia cauſa nos teneant, quam quia judicio populi receptæ ſunt; merito & ea quæ ſine ullo ſcripto populus probavit, tenebunt omnes. Nam quid intereſt ſuffragio populus voluntatem ſuam declaret, an rebus ipſis & factis? Vibulani *Caſ. ad Inſt. Imperial.*

6. *Laſtly*, theſe common carnall principles are *made up* into ſuch eaſie *models* and ſhort *formes*, *fitted* to the *temper* and *ſpirits* of the *common* ſort, and ſo *eaſie* to be *tranſmitted* and *received* by the *meaneſt* capacities, that they become very *generally*

and *effectually* usefull to the *practice* and *designes* of *Satan*. —— Now if any desire *examples* of those that are common amongst *us*, and in our *times*, I commend them to reverend M. *Perkins* his Epistle before his *Catechisme* (the *six principles*), and to their *own* observation. *He*, a *great* Divine, thought it not at all *beneath* his *learning*, *parts*, or *place*, to *take notice* of them and *undertake* them whersoever he met them (*with soft words but hard Reasons*,) yea, would *step out* a little sometimes to *speake* with them. And his *successe* (with *others* that went the *same* way) was admirable. His *Induction* or *Catalogue* was a *good* one and fit (no doubt) for *those* times: and yet a mans *owne* observation may furnish *himselfe* with a *fitter*, now. For these *opinions* are *movables*: not *fixed*, because indeed they have no *bottome* or *foundation*, but *changing* (through the subtilty of *Satan* and wickednesse of *men*) with the *quality* of *Times*, and *variety* of Gods *dispensations*.

As for *Maximes* in *Philosophy*, the 6 *device* (observed) whereby the *Scriptures* are *mated*, and *indirectly disauthorised*, they concerne not the *most*; yet *some* they *doe*, who are so highly *conceited* of the *knowledge* and *Authority* of their *Authors*, and *taken* with their *Arguments* and *Opinions* (of things for the *most* part not agreed on by the *professors* of that *Learning* whereunto they belong) that where their *sence* of the *Scriptures* recedes from such *Opinions*, they *adhere* to their *Opinions* and slight the *Scriptures*. So, of old, the doctrine of the *Resurrection* in the mouth of a chiefe *Apostle*, was but *babling* in the eares of the conceited *Athenians* *. Yea *Christ* himselfe and the whole *Gospell* to the *Greeks* (the prime *Schollars* of the world then) was but *foolishnesse* *. These *notions*, when once they exceed their *Sphere*, and come to usurpe upon *Religion*, spoile *all*. And therefore the *Apostle* enters that *caution* against them, *Col.*2.8. *Beware lest any man spoyle* * *or make a prey of you through Philosophy and vaine deceit*, &c.

* Acts 17 18.

* 1 Cor. 1, 23.

Col. 2. 8. * Συλαγωγῶν.

It is observed by *some*, that the study of some particular *Sciences*, doth more endanger *Religion*, and dispose to *Atheisme*, than the *rest*. Here I would offer *three* things to *Consideration*, with as much *submission* as shall be *required*. *First*, Is not the *difference*

rence of *Receipts* for the *Mind* and *Body Proportionable?* There is, for *both*, Aliment, Medicine and Poyſon. *Aliment* is that wch *Nature* perfectly *digeſteth*. *Medicin* partly *converts* Nature, and is partly *converted* by Nature. *Poyſon* wholly works upon *Nature*, and *Nature not* at all upon *it*. So is it with *knowledges* to the *Mind*; There is of *all ſorts*, and the Proverb holds true in this alſo, *That which is one mans food, or phyſicke, is another mans poyſon*. The *temper* and conſtitution of the *Mind*, (therefore) would be obſerved and *diſcovered*, and *then* choice made *accordingly**. The *palat* may *approve* of that which the *ſtomack cannot* digeſt; and yet perhaps *no reaſon* to be given, from the *qualit*y of what is ſo *eaten*. He is *not wiſe* for himſelfe who to *pleaſe* his *taſt* will *endanger* his *health*; no more is he, who to pleaſe his *fancy* will diſtemper his *heart*. For *what ſhall it profit a man to gaine the whole* (intellectuall) *world, and loſe his owne ſoule?* A ſecond, this; (from the ſame great *Author* * elſewhere, *In Phyſicis & illud affirmo, parum Philoſophia naturalis, & in ea progreſſum liminarem, ad Atheiſmum opiniones inclinare; Contrà multum Philoſophia naturalis, & progreſſum in eâ penetrantem, ad Religionem animos circumferre*. Some *little* taſt and *ſmattering* in *Philoſophy* (ſome parts of it eſpecially) may, eſpecially if not ſanctified and *ſeaſoned* with the *Word* and *Prayer*, looſen the ſoule in points of *Faith* and *Godlineſſe*; Whileſt the * *eye* of the mind is intent and *fixed* upon ſome *particular* diſcoveries of Nature, and, by reaſon of their pleaſing *novelty*, keeps not *diſtance* enough, but ports too near and *cloſe* upon them: whereby it comes to paſſe that the things that are *beyond*, are *hidden* from the ſight. But when a man comes to a more generall and *comprehenſive* knowledge of that *wiſdome* of God which is intrinſecally *in fabrica mundi*, to ſee the dependence and *junctures* of *Cauſes*, and obſerve the *variety* and abſolute *ſoveraignty* of divine *providence*, (be he ſtudious of *Phyſicke*, lawfull *Aſtrologie*, *Policie**, or what he will

* The *Ieſuits* are exceeding carefull in this, concerning their *Novices*, in order to their *Intereſt*: and ſurely it would be every way for good, if ſome regard were had thereof among *Proteſtants* in *England* * *Non omnia ſert omnia tellus.* Sed, *ingenia quæ ſunt in Atheiſmum proniora, videas ferè levia, & dicacia, &c ejuſq; deniq; compoſitionis quæ prudentia & gravitati morum adverſiſſima eſt.* Verul. *de Atheiſm.*

* Qui reſpicit ad pauca de facili pronunciant. * Puſilli fuerunt politici, circumforanei, & magnitudinis actionum incapaces, qui artibus ſuis, &c. omnia aſcripſerunt. *Id. Ibid.* And accordingly *Malvezzi* (reputed as wiſe a Stateſman as moſt *England* hath ſeen) ſtiles thoſe ſo much admired Arts and Sciences of the *Gentiles*, (conſidered ſeparately from the holy *Scriptures*) *puzzolente ſangoſe ciſterne*, &c. *ſtinking dirty ciſterns*, from which a man may ſooner come *loathing*, than *ſatisfyed*. Neither doth he account them true *Politicians* that goe no further. *Div. Perſ.*

within

within the compasse of *Philosophy*,) he will certainly be (farre from *Atheisme*) much *setled* and improved in *naturall Theology*. (For the *invisible things of God, even his eternall power and Godhead, are clearly seen from the creation of the world, and understood by the things that are made*, saith the *Apostle*, *Rom.* 1. 20.) Having *enterd* so far therefore as to *scruple* himselfe, he shall doe well (if *capacity* and *conveniencies* serve) to *proceed* so farre as to *satisfie* himselfe. Our *third*, is likewise from the *same* hand: which, if I mistake not, may serve as an *Antidote* to the *Ingennous*, *viz.* In all *differences* between received *opinions* in *Philosophy*, and the *sentence* of holy *Scripture*, to consider this. That the *Inditer of the holy Scriptures did know foure things which no mortall man attaines to know.* 1. *The mysteries of the kingdome of Glory.* 2. *The perfection of the Lawes of Nature.* 3. *The secrets of the heart of man.* And 4. *the future succession of all Ages.* These deserve to be considered of. And might we have *leave* to *add* a *fourth* Consideration, it should be *this*, Whether the very *Truths* in *Nature* might not be much *more* clearly *understood* if we were better acquainted with the *first fountaine*, originall *cause* and *archetype* of all *Truth* and *knowledge*; *that fountaine of Ideas*, by whom alone God hath *revealed and declared* himselfe, (so *Jamblichus**, as from *Mercury* and the *Aegyptians*) which is indeed the *Lord Jesus Christ*, the *wisdome of God*, who was in the *beginning* without all beginnings *with God*; *when he prepared the heavens, and by line and compasse drew out the face of the Deep*; *by whom, and for whom all things were created, that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible*, and *by whom all things consist*, Col. 1. 16, 17. *Who upholds the worlds by the word of his power*, Heb. 1. 2. & *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdome and knowledge*: He is that *true light of men*, and *soule* of the *world*: In abstraction from whom, the most pleasing *symmetrie* of *Wisdome* and *Reason* in the *face* of *Nature*, are but as the liveleſse *features* of a dead *carkasse*. Who being the expresse *Image* of the invisible *God*, and the *brightnesse* of his *glory* hath revealed the hidden *mysteries* of *God* in the *Scriptures*, by that same *Spirit* by whose *inferiour* operations He assists our knowledge, of the manifest *Invisibles* of *God*, from the *Creature*. Both which *Volumes* (of *Nature* and holy *Scripture*) might, questionlesse, be *better understood*

* Ut refert *Mar. Ficin* Arg. in *Plat* 6 de Rep. Ille fons est Idearum, à quo utique uno Deus per se sufficiens, seipsum explicavit in lucem. *With which that of* Crollius *agrees*, Mundus sensibilis explicitus est in Deo dealiter complicitus, & quæcunq; intra sunt, sunt etiam supra, meliori tamen, nobiliori & perfectiori modo. *de signatur. A truth questionles, however he improves it.*

derſtood and improved, 1. If *ſtudyed* with a dutifull *regard* to *Gods* glory, not ſo much for *ſelf-ſatisfaction*, &c. 2. If ſeaſoned & aſſiſted with *prayer*; not undertaken and carried on in our *own ſtrength*. 3. If ſtudyed with mutuall *reference* each to other; for there is a ſweet *harmony* between the *word* and *works* of *God*; and the *ſtraining* of one *without reference* to the other, brings forth *wild hereſie*, or prophane *Atheiſme*. And 4. all would goe on much the *better*, if *Things* were ſtudyed *more*, and *Opinions leſſe*, in both.

But *ſtay*, did I not over-heare (a good while ſince) a diſdainfull *check* from *ſome*, in the ſtraine of thoſe *Phariſees* in the Goſpell? καὶ σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς; *and doſt thou teach us?* ——— Joh 9.34. To whom, if I thought their *ſecond* thoughts would be *wiſer*. I could be content to returne, *Verbera, ſed audi*; but if not, only this: *I ſpake not to them.*

And as for *naturall Reaſon*,† (the *ſeventh* particular mentioned, as whereby the *Scriptures* are diſauthorized,) there there is *no reaſon* why it ſhould, (as with too many it doth) at all weaken their *Authority*. For, *the prerogative of God extends as well to the Underſtanding and Reaſon, as to the will of man*, (as that *Maſter* * of Reaſon obſerves) and therefore as wee are to *obey* him though we finde a reluctancy in our *will*, ſo we are to *believe* him though we finde a reluctancy in our *Reaſon*.

† *Maximes* in *Philoſophy* are the Determinations of Reaſon limited by learned men of old: but *naturall Reaſon* is the *Faculty* it ſelfe in whomſoever.

Yea, our diſcovery of the *inſufficiency* of *Reaſon* in things *Naturall*, might *convince* us, (if pride and arrogancie did not beguile reaſon) of a *greater* inſufficiency for the things of *God*. How many poore ſimple *common* things in *Nature* might be *reckon'd* up, from the *account* whereof *Reaſon* ſhifts, and *withdrawes* her ſelfe, and *hides* her *head* under the black *vaile* of *Occult qualities*, Naturall *inſtinct*, indiſputable *principles*, &c? which, in *many* things, are found to bee but plauſible *colours*, and deviſed *refuges* for *Ignorance*; which the *pride* of man is loth to *acknowledge*, however the moſt knowing and *ingenuous* do *lament* it, as that which is very *predominant*, even in thoſe of largeſt *parts* and higheſt *improvements*.—*That the*

* *De Augmentis Scientiar. l.* 9

moſt of what they know is but the leaſt of what they know not, &c. The *light* and *darkneſſe* in our *intellectuall* world, being not divided (as in the *ſenſible*) into equall *Hemiſpheres*: but rather *diſperted* as *Moon*-light in a *grove*, where the *ſhadowes* of ſome *few* things we *ſee*, vaile, and *hide* from our ſight, the *ſubſtances* of *many* more that are *unſeen*. And how then ſhall we admit of *Reaſon* as a *Judge* in *ſpiritualls*, that is ſo very imperfect an *Informer* in *Naturalls*? When as ſhe can but *ſhuffle* and *hover* up and downe, about the *out-ſide* of *earthly* things (that are next *about* her) why ſhould we imagine ſhe can *penetrate* and *ſearch* into the *depths* of *heavenly* things, that are *remote* from her? Let her *firſt* determine of the *Formes* of things that *Senſe* and *Reaſon* is moſt *converſant* with: the nature of *ſounds*, true cauſes of *Harmony* and *Diſcord*, and the reſt of thoſe poore *vulgar* things (never accounted among the *Magnalia naturæ*) which are of *ordinary* occurrence, and which ſeeme to *upbraid* and defie the cowardiſe or weakneſſe of *Reaſon*, as oft as they meet us; *before* we allow her to *determine* of the *great things of God*. For, *who is this that would darken His counſell by words without knowledge?* being not only overmatcht with *Behemoth* and *Leviathan* (the *chiefe of the wayes of God*) but even eaſily puzled with a very *Peacocks-feather*, *Job* 38.2. and 39.13.

Object. Is there then *no uſe* at all of *Reaſon* in matters of *Religion*, and the things of *God*?

Anſ. Yes, very *much*: *Firſt*, to apprehend the *myſteries* of Godlines revealed in the *Word*. *Secondly*, to *improve* them, ſo apprehended. 1. As in the *Creature* God *ſubjects* himſelfe in ſome ſort to the cogniſance of *ſenſe*, and yet *ſenſe* without *Reaſon* cannot *feele* (*a*) *after him*: So in the *Scripture* he condeſcends to our *Reaſon*, (*grafts his Revelations upon our rationall notions*) although *Reaſon* without *Faith* cannot *receive* him; (*b*) The *myſteries* of *God* being in *themſelves* too *high* and *flamy*, for *Reaſon* to aſcend unto, and *mingle* with: *God*, of his indulgence, hath inveſted them with certaine *formes*, conforme to *Reaſon*: hath broken, *refracted*, and ſo *fitted* them, to *deſcend* to our dull (*c*) *capacities* and apprehenſions, in the

a Acts 17. 27. Εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτόν.

b Mat. 16.17. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

c See Heb. 5.11. The holy Ghoſt ſeems to *labour* this—— *We have many things to ſay*, (πολὺς ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ δυσερμήνευτος λέγειν) *hard to be declared or opened, in ſpeech, becauſe ye are dull of hearing.*

the *Scriptures*: *Hath applyed his Inſpirations to open our underſtandings, as the form of a Key to the wards of the lock.* And the office of *Reaſon*, as to *theſe* diſcoveries, is meerly *paſſive*, to *apprehend* or *receive* them: not *excogitate* or *deviſe* them, nor yet to *argue* or *queſtion* them. *Reaſon apprehends* them, *Faith approves* them.

But then (*ſecondly*) the *myſteries* being ſo *received* and *ſetled*, as the *Placita Dei*, and Principles *exempt* from all *queſtion*, and examination of *Reaſon*, there is *then* place and roome for *emprovement* by way of *Argument*, and deduction of cleare and naturall *Inferences*; with *analogy* and *reference* to the *Principles* ſo ſtated. Which *Inferences*, the farther off they are rais'd from the *Scriptures*, the weaker and more *feeble* they are. And therefore this *reaſoning* of *Myſteries* muſt not be ſuffered to grow *too bold* and *buſie*, but be moderated with *Moralls*, (*humility*, *reverence*, *&c.*) and *ſtaved* off, when too *eager*, with the *Apoſtles*, ὦ ἄνθρωπε*; *Nay*, *but O man*, *who art thou that replyeſt againſt God?* And 'twere *well* if ſuch-like *ſnarles* were more ordinarily ſo cut in pieces, and all *fruitleſſe queſtions*, and *diſputes* of things beyond the *ken* of Reaſon, *knocks off* with the like divine *Authorities*: as thoſe concerning the *Reſurrection* be, 1 *Cor.* 15. 36. Ἄφρων —*Thou fool*, &c. So mens *imaginations* might haply be not ſo much *ſtrained* and *broken*, as ſometimes they are, or otherwiſe *diſtempered*, to an *unſerviceableneſs* for *God*. For uſually one of theſe *three* things follow upon the *over-ſtraining* of *Reaſon* upon the *myſteries* of *God*: either Reaſon *breaks it ſelfe* upon the *undertaking*; or breaks *through* the *myſtery* into *Hereſie*; or elſe flyes quite *off* from all *Chriſtianity* upon the *non-performance*. And through this very *trapdore* have many of great *parts* and ſtrong *reaſon*, falne from *Chriſtianity* to *Paganiſme* heretofore. As it hath *kept* many in their *Infidelity*; ſo it hath alſo made ſome *Infidels* and *Apoſtates*. Nor can *better* be expected, when all the *myſteries* of Religion are *proſtitute* to the bold *attempts* of carnall *Reaſon*; and dangerous *inferences* made, from thoſe *expreſſions* of the holy *Ghoſt*, by which the (otherwiſe undiſcernible) *things* of *God* are made ſenſible to our *dulnes*, and *hinted* to our earthy

* Rom. 9 19, 20.

capacities: as if the *things* themſelves were *commenſurate* (and no more) to the *expreſſion*, and the *expreſſion* likewiſe adequate (and every way *proportioned*) to the *Things*. As, when the Lord Jeſus *Chriſt* is called the *Sonne of God*, or the *Sonne of man*; by force of *Reaſon* to *urge* and drive theſe *Notions* through all thoſe *Topicks* and *places*, and into all thoſe poſtures, formes, *affections* and *references*, which the *relation* of a *Sonne* would beare, among *men*, were at once to *breake* and *loſe* the ſenſe and *meaning* of *God* in thoſe *expreſſions*. Yee may draw a *ſtick* or a *coale* through a *river*, and not *hurt* it: but let it be *quicken'd* with *fire*, and yee cannot uſe it ſo, and not *quench* it. It is as *impoſſible* to carry *heavenly things*, through *every* part and *angle* of thoſe *earthly Notions** by which they are *hinted*, as to run-up *earth* into *heaven*, and tranſplant our preſent condition (*as* it *is*) into *Glory*. Yea, *Heaven* and the *myſteries* thereof, if *that* could be, were neither *Heaven* nor *Myſteries*. As if a man ſhould think, becauſe he *ſees* his owne *Image* (in the Glaſſe or Water) therefore he may alſo *feele* it; (whereas if *that* were poſſible, it would *ceaſe* to be what it *is*.) Or as if a *Porter* with ſome great *carriage* on his back, ſhould attempt to paſſe through thoſe *doores* and *allies* which he could readily doe with his hands in his pocket? Its true, *hee* may *paſſe* as at other times, but then hee muſt *leave* his *carriage* behinde him. So may thoſe *Notions* that expreſſe divine *myſteries* bee carryed through many rationall *inferences*; but then if we preſſe on *too far*, we may *runne away* with the *Notion*, but ſhall *leave* the *myſterie* behinde us. For this *Threed* is too *big* to follow our *Needle*; but will either *ſlip*, or *break* the *eye* of *Reaſon*, that ſhall goe to traile it out into *embroyderies* and *curioſities*.

* See Joh 3.

Now, that the *Office* and *Operations* of Reaſon as to divine *myſteries*, are to be thus *bounded*, is evident from a briefe *ſurvey* and Inventory of *Reaſon*, in reference to the Things of *God*. The *naturall* performances of *Reaſon* are either from *inward principles* improved, (common *roots* and *ſeeds*, of *light* and *knowledge*, that are *borne with* us) Or elſe by that *light* and ſtrength that is *taken in* from *without*. But thoſe inward *principles* of *corrupt* nature *cannot* forme or furniſh out the

Counſell

Counſell of *God*. That *God is*, and *that hee is to bee celebrated with the higheſt honours*, (admit) may be found *within*, as naturall *principles*: Yet *what a one this God is*, and *how he will bee honoured*, muſt be learnt from *without*. Otherwiſe there had been as generall an *agreement* of Mankinde concerning the Divine *Nature* and *Worſhip*, as there is of the Divine *Eſſence*, and (generall) *Right*, (that he *is*, and is to be *worſhipped*.) For thoſe *Naturall principles* are common to *humane nature* therefore called *Communes notitiæ* *. * Κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι.

And as for that *light* that comes in from *without*, it muſt either be by *Contemplation* and *Obſervation* of the *Creature*, or elſe from *Teſtimony*. *Obſervation* indeed brings in *much Intelligence* concerning *God*. For the *inviſible things of God are clearely to bee ſeen from the Creation of the World, and underſtood by the things that are made*. But ſtill this diſcovery is but of what God *is*, not of what he *willeth*. His *eternall power* and *God-head* may bee ſeen upon the *creature* (The whole world being but *q.* one great *Hieroglyphicall* deſcription and *Hiſtory* thereof:) But his *eternall counſell* and *purpoſe* is *not* to be found in the *creature*; becauſe indeed it is *not there*, (at leaſt, the light and ſight of Angels and men cannot *finde* it there.) And therefore it is ſaid, *There is a naturall Theology, not any naturall Chriſtianity*. The worke of *Redemption*, and all that belongs thereto, being a *cleare ſuperinduction* upon the *creature* accurſed and deſtroyed by *ſinne*. So that Naturall *Reaſon*, notwithſtanding her greateſt proficiency in the ſtudy of *Nature*, is yet *to ſeek* of the *minde* and *Counſell* of God, what he would have us *think of* him, and what hee would have us *doe for* him.

This, therefore, muſt come from *Teſtimony*, and *Revelation*: but *who hath knowne the minde of the Lord? or who hath been his Counſellor?* Surely *not any*, his *Counſellor*; and *not many* made of his *Counſell*. Yet his *minde* is *declared*, and his Counſell *revealed* ſufficiently, in all things that concerne *us* to know. For, *the onely begotten Sonne which is in the boſome of the Father, he hath declared him* *; and *manifeſted his Name*, and Minde, his bleſſed *VVill* and *VVord*, and therein his *Glory*, as farre * Joh. 1. 18. Joh. 17. 6, 8, 14, 22, 26.

farre as he thought *fit* that *mortall ſinners* ſhould know it. This *Diſcovery* is recorded by the Spirit of God in the *Scriptures*; and is to be *entertain'd* on our parts with humble *beliefe* thereof, and *joy* therein: *not* to be *queſtion'd* and *quarrell'd* by *Reaſon*. *This* being a *principall* point in that diſcovery of his bleſſed *will*, concerning our *Religious* ſervice of him, *That he may have the Soveraignty* of our *Reaſon*, and be *believed* in the gracious *diſcoveries* which he hath made of *himſelfe*, by his *Sonne*, *Spirit*, and *Word*, unto us. And ther's all the Reaſon in the world, He ſhould have this *yielded* him; and that *none* ſhould *ſhare* with Him in this *Royalty*. 1. Becauſe thoſe *Diſcoveries* and *Revelations* of his Nature and Counſell are *not againſt* right Reaſon, but *above* it. Whereas all *other* Teſtimonies whatſoever are either *againſt* Reaſon, or *not above* it. 2. Becauſe they are *not deſtructive* of Reaſon (though *above* it) but *perfective* thereof, they cleare up *raiſe* and heighten *reaſon*, not *deſtroy* it (as the *Devills* did and do with *Heathens*.) 3. We can by *no other* meanes attaine to the *knowledge* of thoſe things which *Reaſon* concludes it *fit* we *ſhould know*. We have *all* a naturall deſire of *happines*, and inward *convictions* of, and *propenſions* to *Eternity*. And if *this* bee not the higheſt happines, and the *way* (directed in the *Word*) the *likelieſt*; *where* will Reaſon finde a *better*? A man may *purſue* his owne *imaginations*, or run after the *deluſions* of *Satan*, but the *ſoule* finds reſt no where, till it fix *here*. And 4. When once *Reaſon* hath *received* theſe Diſcoveries (being raiſed by *Faith*) it *diſcernes* a *beauty* in them ſo *rare* and *excellent* as no *other* knowledge in the world can parallel. As in the new Diſcoveries of *Nature*, (concerning the *Loadſtone*, ſome things in *Chymiſtry*, &c.) although ſcarce any *rationall* man in the world would have *believed*, *imagined*, or thought them *poſſible before*; yet having *found* and obſerved them, he findes a world of *Reaſon in* the things, though *not for* them. So in *Scripture* Diſcoveries; though the things themſelves bee many of them meere *Placita*, and *no Reaſon* can be given *for* them; yet there's a *perfect* Reaſon perceiveable *in* them. (And not only in the things to be *believed*, but things to be *performed* alſo, there's *Reaſon beyond* reaſon;

reaſon, as in *Selfe-Denyall*, *Love to enemies*, &c. And therefore let *Reaſon* in every perſon know her proper *place*, and *preferment*; which is to be a diligent humble *ſervant* to *Religion*, not the *Governeſſe*, *Contriver*, or *Controller* thereof. To act humbly *ex officio*, and not intermeddle *pro arbitrio*, in the *myſteries* of God.

And yet in *Morals* there ſeemes to be a greater latitude for *Reaſon* and *Argument*; becauſe *Scripture*-Diſcoveries of *that* nature, are *agreeable* to right *Reaſon*, duely *informed*: and (accordingly) are *delivered*, not as *Revelations* of things altogether *unknowne*, but as further *Informations* and *preſſings* of things in ſome meaſure *knowne* of man; and with an expreſſe *ſuppoſall* of ſome kinde of *copy* of them *within* us (*the work of the Law written in every mans heart*, Rom. 2. 15.) whereunto, in ſome *caſes*, the holy *Ghoſt* makes *appeales*, &c. And *yet*, even in theſe *morals* alſo, it becomes us to be modeſtly *diſtruſtfull* of our owne *ſufficiency*, not confidently adhering to our *Reaſon*, where it *departs* from the manifeſt *ſcope* of the *Word*. For, *Reaſon* is no infallible *rule*; but *may* faile (in one or other) both in point of *light*, and alſo of *ſtrength*, or truth of *Inference*: yea it *is* ordinarily beguiled with *Senſe* and *Opinion*. Whereas in the *Scriptures* there is a *perfect copy*, an *infallible*, *comprehenſive* and *eternall rule*, of all *Duty*, both to *God* and *Man*. Rom. 2. 14, 15.

And, as for *Naturall* Truths, (howſoever *ſome* would fain extort and ſqueeze all *Philoſophy* out of *Scripture*) the *Spirit* of *God* in the *Scriptures* makes not *that* any part of his *buſines*: delivers no *Inſtitutions* of *Nature* dogmatically, but onely *toucheth* upon ſome of them *occaſionally*; by way of *compariſon*, or to ſet forth the *excellencies* of *God*, or *weaknes* of *Man*, &c. And therefore ſometimes *ſpeaks* of them, not ſo much according to the *ſtate* and *nature* of the *things* themſelves, as in complyance with the *apprehenſions* of people, and times, which ſuch *paſſages* in Scripture more immediately *concern'd*. So that *Reaſon* hath a *larger* ſcope here, as to the *things* of *nature*, and yet not ſo *boundles* as to cenſure the *language* of God in *Scripture*. To *this*, that wiſe ſaying of *Malvezzi* * may ſtand for a Corollarie; *He that to reſolve or determine of Productions in Nature, alleageth*

* *Chi per iſcioglier i Fiſici auvenimenti, adduce Iddio per ragione, è poco Filoſofo: e chi non lo adduce per iſcioglimento de Politici, è poco Chriſtiano.* Dav. Perſeguitato.

leageth God for his Reaſon, is but a ſlender Philoſopher: and he that does not produce him, for the reſolution of events in Policy, is but little a Chriſtian.

The *Eighth* and *laſt* of thoſe *by-Authorities* with which *Satan* practiſeth to ſlight & weaken the Holy *Scriptures* indirectly, *is*, pretended-extraordinary *Revelation.* Whereof having occaſionally ſpoken *ſomething already*, under ſome of the former *practiſes* obſerved, wee ſhall *adde* no more but this onely *hint*: That 'tis very *fit* wee take *notice*, how *God*, by his wiſe Providence hath watched to *prevent* much of that *miſchiefe*, which might have befaln the *Church* in our *times* by meanes of this grand *Impoſture*. And bleſſed be his *Name*, that hath ſo governed the proceedings of *Satan*, that though he hath grievouſly *abuſed* ſome particular *perſons* with vaine *viſions* and notorious *lies*, under pretence of *Divine Revelations*, yet they have proved ſoveraign *Antidotes* †, againſt the danger of that *Infection*. For, much more might ſome dangerous *errors* have *prevail'd*, (wrapt up as they were with divers winning *Truths*) had *ſome* forborne to forge, and affixe this *Seale* to their Doctrine which *God* from heaven hath *canceld* * in the ſight of the whole world. Who knowing *our unfitnes* for ſo great a *triall* as his *Church* of old † was tempted with, and hereafter muſt expect to be, *forbeares* to put us as *yet* upon it. But the times muſt come, that they ſhall worke ſuch *ſignes* and *wonders*, that, not here and there one, but *the Elect* (indefinitely) ſhall bee *endangered* by them. Then will be the *Faith* and *Patience of the Saints.*

† The *Fiery flying Roll*, (burnt Feb. 6.) might have proved an admirable Receit againſt *Enthuſiaſme*, had it not bin too buſie with thoſe in Authority.

* Iſa. 45. 25. He fruſtrateth the token of liars, and makes Diviners mad.—

† Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3.

Thus the *Scriptures* are *indirectly* ſlighted with many *counter-authorities* ſet up *with* them, and *above* them. It is alſo done *more indirectly*, when, though nothing elſe be *profeſſedly* ſet up that may *ſenſibly* mate and overtop them, yet the *Authority* of *God* ſpeaking in them is *not obeyed*, As many good humane *Lawes*, may bee not-*denyed*, nor *quarrel'd*, nor yet ſenſibly *juſtled out* with illegall powers, but generally *owned* and *commended*, and yet not put in *execution*. This is a *practiſe* to which *Satan* makes many of Gods *profeſſed* ſervants *inſtrumentall*; taking advantage of their *Feares*, *Hopes*, *Dulneſſe* of ſpirit; want of *Zeale*, *Courage*, and *Reſolution*; *Paſſions*

of

of all ſorts, *engagements*, &c, to withdraw them from an actuall *ſubmiſſion* to the *ſupremacy* of the *VVord*: ſo that though they *owne*, *uſe*, *magnifie*, and profeſſe much ſincere *affection* to the *Scriptures*, yet, in particular *caſes* at leaſt, and *practically*, *deny* their *Authority*, and *make the Word of God of none effect*.

And now (at length) we have done with the *Fourth* and *main Obſervation*, concerning the many practiſes of Satan againſt the holy *SCRIPTURE*. Which are *more largely* diſcourſed than was *intended*. 1. In *conſideration* of the vaſt *importance* of the *Argument*. For in the *Purity* and *Authority* of the Scriptures preſerved, all *Truth* is *ſecured*. Retaine them in *purity*, and wee *hold* the Truth: and if *Truth* be in ſome part *loſt*, yet *keep up* their *Authority*, and we hold the *doore open* for Truths *re-entring*. But if their Purity and Authority *both* be let *goe*, then *farewell* Truth; for we have *no meanes*, in *view*, to *recover* what we have *loſt*, nor yet to *keep* what we have *left*. 2. The main *weight* of all the *reſt* of his practiſes, Satan layes on *this*, againſt the *Scriptures*, neither can *thoſe* ſtand, if this fall. 3. A dear and tender *regard* of ſome faithfull *Chriſtians*, whoſe judgements have been ſomewhat *ſhaken* concerning theſe things, hath carryed *out* Diſcourſe the farther, in hopes of fetching ſome of *them in*. (And any *ſucceſſe* of this nature would *countervaile* a thouſand *cenſures*.) 4. And *laſt* of all; Since firſt thoughts of this *Subject*, we have occaſionally underſtood (from divers good Chriſtians) that *Satan* is extraordinary-*buſie* of *late*, in theſe very *practiſes*. And where the *Aſſault* is moſt *violent*, the *Quarters* would be the better *ſtrengthened*.

CHAP. X.

The Fifth *Observation: The true and only Rule of Religion (the holy Scriptures) being so waved, corrupted and weakned; the most necessary and fundamentall* Doctrines *and Establishments of the Gospel are suspected and* questioned: *and the most dangerous* Evills *(in Opinion and Practice)* debated.

IT is an old *Rule*, and generally received, *That a rationall doubting of things, is a good preparative to the right understanding of them (a)*: and on the contrary, that nothing is more prejudiciall to *sound* knowledge, than to sit downe with *confidence* upon our owne *opinions*, and repose our selves in the things we hold or know, without making *doubt* or *question* of the truth or sufficiency of our *knowledge*; whereby it often comes to passe, that wee embrace the *clouds* of our affected *Ignorance*, in stead of solid and substantiall *(b) Learning*.

Which Rule is *true*, of all that *knowledge* which is properly of *rationall* institution or *production*, (attained by *Observation*, and emprovement of *Naturalls*) Yea, and it holds also in matters of *Religion*, so farre forth as *God* hath left any *particulars*, concerning *faith* or *practice*, not clearly (*in terminis*) and expressely *determined* in the holy Scriptures: but either (*c*) *comprehensively* included in *generall* discoveries; or else *virtually* implyed, in some *other* things more clearly laid down, from which (as *premisses* rationally considered) they may be *argued* and *concluded*. For *these*, being left to the search of Reason (*provided* we hold fast to Scripture-grounds, and proceed with reverence, (*d*) *caution*, and sobriety) may be *further inquired* of and *debated*. Because we *have* (and it may be *can* but have) a *probable* judgement or *Opinion* of them; no *certaine* knowledge, or *assurance*: at least, not without good *consideration* and *enquirie*.

a Ἔστι δὲ τοῖς εὐπορῆσαι βουλομένοις προύργου, τὸ διαπορῆσαι καλῶς. *A. Metaph. l. 2. c. 1.*

b -*Ne incognita pro cognitis habeamus, temere assentiendo, &c.* Cic.

c *And if there bee any other Commandement it is briefly* comprehended *in this saying, &c.* Rom. 13. 9.

d *But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon.* 1 Cor. 3, 10, 13.

But

But then there be *other* things in Religion that are more *fundamentall*, and eſſentially-neceſſary to *Chriſtianity*; not attainable by *Reaſon*, but immediately inſtituted of *God* and *plainly* diſcovered in the holy *Scriptures*: which wee are bound to *ſubmit* our underſtandings unto, as the meer *Placita Dei*, and to take them upon the *Authority* of his owne *Word*, without conſulting or asking leave of *Naturall* Reaſon. *God* hath reſerved to himſelfe this *Royalty*, to give certaine * *principles* to the underſtanding and beliefe of man, by a *Law*: which therefore muſt not be *denyed*, nor at all examined, firſt or laſt, ſo as to be call'd in *queſtion* or *doubted* of; becauſe there is enough in the *Scriptures* to *convince* Reaſon, that they *are* the *Word* of God; and there's all the *reaſon* in the world for this, that *God* ſhould bee *believed* upon his *Word*, and *obeyed* in all hee *Commands*. * Heb. 5. 12. & 6. 1.

And of *theſe*, ſome are *pure* myſteries, and very *great*, *without controverſie*: ——*God manifeſted in the* * *fleſh*, *&c.* But then other ſome are of a *mixt* nature, partly *myſticall*, and partly alſo *poſitively-morall*: having *reaſon* enough in them *as* they are *ſtated* of God: and yet *no* reaſon (diſcernible of *Nature*) *why* they ſhould be *ſo* ordained, ſtated and determined, and not *otherwiſe*. Of this latter ſort, I conceive are all Goſpel-*Ordinances*, and Goſpel-*graces*; which (as to their *ſubſtance* at leaſt) are all *clearly* and *expreſſely* appointed in the holy *Scriptures*. * 1 Tim. 4. 6.

Now this *prepoſterous* effect hath the malice and ſubtilty of the Devill upon the moſt of men, that the things which might *lawfully* be *doubted* and queſtioned, are commonly held with *reſolution* and *confidence*: whereas *thoſe*-which *ought* to be *received* and retained, *without* all *examination* of reaſon, or conſultation with *fleſh* and *bloud*, are either utterly refuſed, or entertained with much *doubting* and *ſuſpicion*.

And ſuch *ſuſpicions* of the *Truths* of *God* may be formed (as oft they *are* alſo of good *men*) either by *miſapprehenſions inwardly conceived*, or by *miſinformations*, ſubtilly and maliciouſly *infuſed*; either by the darkneſſe of corrupt *Nature*, or by the crafty inſtigation of *Satan* and his *Inſtruments*; who *plott's* upon

mens *soules*, just as some *Jesuited Machiavelians* upon men in *Authority*; injecting and hatching secret *jealousies* and *suspicions* in their mindes, of their best *friends*, and working them to a *good opinion* and *confidence* of their assured *enemies*: that so having disobliged and *abandoned* such as would be *faithfull*, they may lye more *open* to the practice of such as have complotted their *Destruction*.

Now so long as the *Scriptures* (the supreme *Law* of all *Truth* in Religion) are *retained* in their native purity and just Authority, the fundamentall establishments of *Christ* are reverently *preserved* as they are clearly discovered. For if *question* be made concerning them, the *Scripture* (speaking plainly to us of them, *as unto Children* *) presently *determines* them. But where Satan once prevailes to *remove*, corrupt, or disauthorise the *Scriptures*, hee quickly renders the most necessary *Truths* (grounded and contained in them) *suspected*: and, on the contrary, makes the *evill* and falshood of the greatest untruths and corruptions in the world (discovered and reproved by them) to be *questioned* and *doubted*.

* Heb. 12. 5.

The *Wheeles* upon which this *Device* moves ars *two*. First, it is *plausible*. Secondly, it is (also) *forcible*, and full of efficacy; *vireſq; acquirit eundo*.

It is *plausible*, by reason of many faire *colours* and *pretences* that *smooth* it: which are these and the like. *The most certaine knowledge and assurance is that which is founded in doubting. Valdè dubitatur ne dubitaretur*; *Doubts well satisfied are Truths well setled*. These pretend edification of *soules*, vindication and confirmation of *Truth*: and are *true* of the things (above mentioned) that are *fit* to bee questioned, when *fitly* questioned. Againe; *The cleerest Truths may best endure to be tried. Gold shrinks not in the fire. Et meritò ejus fides suspecta, quam suspicio labefactat. Shall we adventure our soules upon that which will not endure to be Questioned, &c.* Here the *credit* of *Truth* is pretended. (There be more of this sort.) Thus it is *plausible*.

It is also very *forcible*; and of great *efficacy* to oppose Truth, and introduce Error (the Devils *grand* designe) which this practice

practice performes not so *sensibly* as *surely*; (the more *dangerous* the while.) For, *first*, this is certaine; *Ex dubitatione Error honorem & auctoritatem acquirit, Veritas repulsam patitur.* Doubtfull *Questions* conferre *Authority* and *credit* upon *Error*, but *affront*, and diminish (alwayes) the reputation of (*e*) *Truth*. Er all *doubting* presupposeth *uncertainty* (or *inevidence*, at least) of the thing doubted of. It is but *Retentio rationis ex obice*; a *witholding* of *consent* to a thing upon discovery of *reason* or probability for the (*f*) *contrary*. And though in *other* things it may sometimes *dispose* to a farther *search* of Truth, yet in the grounds of *Religion*, it commonly makes *way* for the *losse* of Truth. It *opens* a *doore* indeed for *Truth* to *enter*, if she stands *without*; but for Truth to turne *out* at, if, before, shee was *within*. Thus it *defames* Truth, and *credit's* Error; and also opens an *out-let* for Truth, and an *in-let* for Error; brings the *soule* to a dangerous *parley* about the *surrender* of Truth, and *taking-in* of Error. But there is *another* more dangerous than both *these*; It carries with it a *formall* contrariety to the great * *Gospel-command*, and worke of *God*, which is stedfast *believing*; the *prime* condition of the New *Covenant*, required to *salvation*. For πίστις and διάκρισις *Faith* and *doubting*, or *sticking*, controversall *disputing* and *examining*, are set (by our *Saviour* * and the Apostle) one to another, not as *differing* in *degrees* onely, but as *opposit* in their *nature*. It is also opposed to the *Worship* of Christ, *Matth* 28.17. And quite contrary to the very *scope* of the holy *Ghost* in the *Scriptures*, which holds out *Jesus Christ the same yesterday to day and for ever*, and (at the next word) adviseth that wee *bee not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines*, *Heb.* 13. 8, 9. but that we have *received Christ Jesus the Lord*,, so *wee* should *walke in him*, *rooted*, *stablish'd*, *strengthened*, *setled*, *&c.* *Beware lest any man spoile you; let no man beguile you*, *&c.* *Col.* 2. And so *Ephes.* 6. 10.—15. *Be strong in the Lord, put on the whole armour of God; stand* against the wiles of the Devill, *stand fast*, *withstand*— and having done all, *stand*. All which, and many other places, require a *fixednes* of judgement in the *Truth* of *God*.

e As, to question an evill mans badnes, credits him: but to question a good mans goodnes, defames him.

f Ἀπορίαι περὶ τῶν ἐναντίων εἰσιν. *De cælo*, *l.* 1. *c.* 10.

* A setled *perswasion* of the truth, is so necessarily required in the Gospel, that the Gospel it selfe is often called *the Faith*.

* Mat. 21. 21. & Rom 14. 23.

* Gen. 3. 1.

This is the scope and current of divine *Counsells* and *Commands* given-out from time to time by way of *prevention* of this very *practice* of Satan: as if there were nothing so much to be feared of *Christians* as this; lest they should *stagger* and grow *unsetled*, be *startled* (g) & *amused* at the things of *Christ*, by subtilties of the *Devill*. And indeed there's hardly *any* of his stratagems (though he makes use of so many *in view*, that one would think he had no *reserves*) that doth more *execution* upon *soules* than this, of *unsetling* our *judgements* in foundation-*Truths*.-*Hinc illæ lachrymæ*. It was the *beginning of his strength*; the very *first* of all his *practises* upon *mankinde*; and the *fittest* he could devise to *commence* and *carry on* his grand enterprise upon those *innocent* soules.——*Yea, hath God said, yee shall not* * *eat, &c?* He begins *faire* and *farre of*, and by one and the same *instrument* both *Discovers* and *worketh*. Discovers how farre her innocent nature was *apprehensive* and *mindfull* of Gods *command*; and withall *workes* her mind to consider *doubtfully*, and as a *question*, of that whereof the *Serpent* makes the *Question*. This was the *Needle* which drew after it the twisted *threed* of sinne and death into the (*h*) world; The scaling *ladder* which he claps to the walls, and by which hee quickly *enters*: the very *Shooing-horne* (*i*) whereby all mischiefe and misery was *drawne* upon mankinde: even the *questioning* of the cleare and plain meaning of Gods *Commandement*: Which had our first *Parents* peremptorily *resisted*, in all likelihood the devill would have *desisted*. So saith the holy *Ghost*, *Jam.* 4. 7. *Resist the Devill, and hee will flee from you*. But *how* resist? *Peter* tells us, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. *Whom resist, stedfast in the faith*: Let him not (*k*) *loosen* your judgement in any point of Faith: that's the *best* way to *resist* him.

For, the *Diamond* or *Jewell* that's once *loosened* is quickly *lost*. And the *Foundations* of Religion being *undermined* (by * these *hill-rats* that worke themselves into the very *rocks*) the whole *building* soone runs-together into a *heap*. When men come once to *doubt of* their principles they are easily *drawne*-off from their Principles. *Eve* stayed not long upon the *question*, when once shee had entertain'd it, but came off quick-

g Phil. 1. 28. μὴ πτυόμενοι.

* Gen 3 1.

h --quo tanta lues erupcrit ortu.

i Rom. 5. 12. *And so death passed upon all men, &c.*

k Principiis obsta.

* Prov. 30. 26.

quickly to an unhappy *determination*. Nor can wee expect a better *iſſue*, if we reſolve to admit of the ſame *danger*. Theſe *vains-bablings* and unprofitable *queſtions*, naturally *encreaſe to more ungodlineſſe*. *And they eate, as doth a* * *Cancer*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, 2 *Tim.* 2.16. *It hath overthrown the faith of ſome*, and may doe the like of (*l*) *others*. For between an unſetled *Queriſt* (in the *grounds* of Religion eſpecially) and an errant *Heretick*, there's but a *thin* partition †. They are next *neighbours*, yee may perceive, *Titus* 3.9,10. Yea, they are *inmates*, for they dwell both under a *Roofe*. The former, *in aditu*, the *entry*, or out-roomes (the place of firſt *entertainment*) and the other, *in receſſu, & penetralibus*, in the *ſecret chambers*, which our *Saviour* bids beware of. *Matth.*24.26.

* Tim. 2 16.

l *Nocuit, ſemperq; nocebit.*

† *Anceps quæriſta, Hæreticus deſignatus.* For being once unſettled from Truth, a man is ſoon ſetled upon Error.

Now the *reaſon* of this *proximity* of *Hereſie* and *doubting* (of principles) is obvious, *viz.* Not onely the Influence of *Gods* righteous *judgement*, governing the malice and ſubtlety of the Devill in all his *practiſes*, to his owne *glory* in the puniſhment of Men, (which is evident from *Ezek.* 14.4,5. with *Rom.* 1.21. and 2 *Theſ.* 2.11,12.) But there is a great deale of Reaſon alſo for it, from the *nature* of the *thing* it ſelfe; and the forcibleneſſe of *that* which makes us *doubt* of thoſe things which we thought *certaine*, in compariſon of that which *ſettles* us upon *Errour*, when once wee thinke the caſe doubtfull and *uncertaine*. Moſt plainly, *thus*; When any *weight* hath fixed the *Scale* upon the ground, it muſt be a *greater* weight or counterpoiſe (in the other Scale) that *ſtirres* it, and fetcheth it up to an *equipoyſe* or *even beame*: but when it is once at *that*, a ſmall matter *caſts* it the other way. Now the *queſtioning* and *doubting* which we are ſpeaking of, findes the ſoule grounded and *reſted* upon ſome religious *Principles*: and the firſt *effect* it hath upon us is, to *unſettle* and *ſtirre* us, and ſo (by laying more *weight* upon the contrary *opinion*) to bring us to a ballance of *indifferency*, and uncertainty between (*m*) both; Now whatever it bee that brings us to *this*, muſt be full *as weighty* in our Judgements, as the *grounds* of our firſt *Principles*: whereas being once in *in æquilibrio* and at *indifferency*, a *ſmall* matter will *determine* us upon the *contrary*.

m *Dubitatio eſt ſuſpenſio rationis, propter æquilibrium contrariarum rationum.*

Thus

Thus the *Diſeaſe* is very *dangerous* in many reſpects; It will alſo be found, that our *Times* are very *(n) ſick* of it, and that it hath been very *epidemicall* and infectious. Heretofore *Chriſtians* were *famous* according as they were thought to bee *well-grounded* and *eſtabliſhed* in the Faith; *ſound* and *ſetled* in their principles and practice. But alas! *now* adayes hee is *no body* that is not ſo farre gone in *New light*, as (at leaſt) to *queſtion* and *doubt* of all *Old Truths*; and that doth not profeſſe himſelfe a *Sceptick*; unſatisfied, and to-*ſeek* for his *Religion*. The *Propheſies* of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* are *fulfilled* among us;. Many that thought themſelves very well aſſured of *Chriſt* long agoe, look back with *contempt* now, upon their former *profeſſion*; and *runne-out* with ſuch diſcurſions after the *ſound* of his *Name*, as if they had *never* yet been *acquainted* with the truth of his *Nature*. *Here is Chriſt*, ſay they, nay *there hee is*—&c. *The time will come when they will not endure ſound Doctrine*, (ſaith *Paul*) *but ſhall turne away their eares from the Truth, and ſhall be turned unto Fables**. And this *turning* wee ſee enough of in theſe *times*, which cannot bee but upon the *hinge* of this *Practice*. Yea the world runnes *wilde* in *Queries* and *Queſtions*, *ſtrifes*, vaine *janglings*, perverſe diſputings, or *gallings*, prophane *bablings*, unprofitable boundles and endles *doubts* and contentions. There's no end of them; nor is there *any thing* in Religion *privileged* or *protected* from ſuffering by them. We ſpeak not now of *ſuperſtructualls*, things meerly *probable* or leſſe-materiall; (points which being *not* ſo *clearly* laid downe and *determined* in Scripture, good *Chriſtians* in all ages have had their *differences* about; (though in *theſe* alſo wee ſhould labour for (*o*) *unity*.) But of the moſt *neceſſary* Truths, and *Fundamentall*; the *Magnalia Dei*, great myſteries of *Godlineſſe*, eſſentiall and *radicall* to *Chriſtianity*. Such as heretofore *Chriſtians* would have *trembled* to have heard once *queſtioned*; ſuch as the Devill hath ſeldome found or made inſtruments *monſtrous* enough to *deny*, or profeſſedly to make *doubt of* among Chriſtians: Which yet have been, not onely *queſtioned* (and ſo *affronted* and *defamed* that way) but alſo horribly *traduced* amongſt us, and unworthily *reproached*, as if they were

(n) 1 Tim. 6.4. *Doting about queſtions, &c.* The word is, νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις καὶ λογομαχίας---Sick of queries or *queſtions*, & *word-fights*; & ſtands aptly oppoſed to ὑγιαίνοις λόγοις, (Verſe 3,) *wholſom words*: and to that *copy* or *forme of ſound words*. 2 Tim. 1.13.

* 1 Tim. 4 3,4.

* 1 Tim 1. 4. Ἐκζητήσεις.

o 1 Cor. 1. 10. *I beſeech you brethren in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chr. that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſions among you; but that yee be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgement.*

were the baſeſt *fictions* and *gulleries* in the World. And that in *Print*, and by *ſome* too that would bee thought ſingular *good* men, and of *glorious* New-*light*: I might adde alſo, of *place* ſufficient to patronize their *Errours*.

The very *myſtery* of the moſt holy *Trinity*, (which is indeed the *foundation* of *all*, the *Creed* of *Jeſus Chriſts* owne making, and the *Faith* which he would have *all* his *Diſciples baptized into* *) how Heatheniſhly is it *blaſphem'd* by many? but moſt notoriouſly by one wretched *Pamphlet*; which, if the *Impudence* and *Wit* had been of equall growth, might have been thought (by the Title) ſome piece of *Porphyrie* in *Engliſh*; rather than the *conceptions* of one that would be thought a *Chriſtian*, and of ſo high a *place* as is pretended. The *Title-Page* whereof, if well conſidered, deſerves as well the *animadverſions* of ſupreme *Authority*, as whatſoever hath been reſented with moſt *ſeverity*. Whereof this is *part* * [*A briefe ventilation of that chaffie and abſurd opinion, of Three Perſons* † *or Subſiſtences in the Deity.*]——*Sed increpit te Dominus!* The LORD governe and *rebuke* that, and all ſuch-like ſpirits of of *Hereſie*, in his good time, for *Chriſts* ſake.

* Mat. 28. 19.

* Printed Anno 1649.

† This Fundamentall point is abundantly vindicated in Mr. *Auſtins* Book, entituled, *Scripture manifeſtation of the equality of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt.* Printed 1650.

Yet why ſhould wee enter upon *particulars*, when as that *Principle* of the Doctrine of *Chriſt* cannot be named, that hath clearly ſcaped the ſcarres and ſcratches of wicked and deſperate *Tongues* and *Pens* in theſe times. The *fall* of man, Originall *ſinne*, Divinity of the *Scriptures*; the Deity, Sonſhip, Perſon, Satisfaction, and Interceſſion of *Chriſt*; His *Ordinances*, *Miniſtery*, *True-Church*, *&c.* are they not *all* (at leaſt) *queſtioned*, whether there bee or ever were any ſuch things in *being*? Likewiſe the *Immortality* of the *Soule*, *Reſurrection* of the body, laſt *Judgement*, *Heaven* and *Hell*: are they not all rudely and wretchedly toſs'd up and downe in bold and wicked *Debates*, even by ſuch as (with all deceiveablenes) pretend to extraordinary *light*, and high emprovements? And the like in *moralls*: as, *Whether the Saints have not a right to the poſſeſſion and Juriſdiction of the whole world?* Whether they ought to be ſubject to *any civill Authority*, (or whether *Magiſtracy be lawfull* among Chriſtians.) Whether *Children may*

be trained up in reading the Scriptures,&c. Yea in one word, *Whether any thing be unlawfull to Beleevers*, which they finde themſelves diſpoſed to *doe*? With many moe, of the ſame *ſtraine*, which any ſober *Chriſtian* would be ſick to heare of, in their particulars.

2 Sam. 1.20. But *tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in Askelon, leſt the Philiſtims rejoyce, and the uncircumciſed triumph, &c.*——*He* poured out his pious wiſhes *there*: but alas! 'twas *too late* then to thinke of preventing. It's *our* caſe juſt. What honeſt heart is not wounded to thinke of the *Infamy* and reproach, that theſe things have brought upon the *Proteſtant*-Intereſt, and *Engliſh*-Nation? And *who* is he that would once *mention* them, if his *ſilence* could but aboliſh and *conceale* them? But *theſe* complaints can never reach ſo *farre*, as the *report* of them is already gone. ——*Jam fama totum vulgata per orbem.*—— The *Romiſh Janizaries*, (Jeſuitiſh *emiſſaries*) want neither *Tongues* nor *Lungs* to trumpet out their own *ſucceſſes*. They have helpt to *worke* us into the poſture wee are in, and now they ſtand and *laugh* at us, and expoſe our *nakednesſe* to the worlds view; nouriſhing as great *hopes* upon the account of this *Practice*, as from any *one* thing beſide whatſoever. For if they ſhould not *fix* theſe our dangerous *unſettlements* in Religion *directly* upon their *owne* Intereſt, yet they will not bee wanting to make their *advantage* of them, to *weaken* the Reputation of the *Proteſtant*-Religion throughout the world.

Now the more *prevailing* this practice is, the greater is the *danger* thereof; and the greater the *danger*, the more ſhould be our *care* and watchfulnes to *avoid* it: whereunto ſuch conſiderations as *theſe* (ſeriouſly entertained) ought to quicken every true Chriſtian. 1. Such a *ſuſpicion* of his revealed *Truth* is highly *diſhonourable* to *God*. 2. Affront's and *defames* his *Truth*. 3. preſenteth a great *advantage* to *Sin* and *Satan* (Gods great enemy and ours.) 4. Endangereth our *Soules* to miſ-beliefe; which *breaks off the naturall branches* from the good (*a*) *Olive*. We *ſtand by faith*. 5. It is both an *effect* and *cauſe* of Gods great diſpleaſure: a *puniſhment* and *ſinne* both in (*b*) one. 6. It is a ſinne that *contradicts* the *ſcope* of the

a Rom. 11. 20, 21.
b Rom. 1. 21. 2 Theſ. 2. 10.

Word,

Word, and the *end* of all *Ordinances*: And argues *baſenes* of ſpirit, (as in *Moralls* to queſtion things that are manifeſt by the light of (c) *Nature*, ſo in *ſpirituals*) to *ſuſpect* the truths which *God* hath *plainly* revealed, and we have received in *Scripture*. 7. For *Chriſtians* to *queſtion*, is more than for *Infidels* to *deny*, and more unkindly it is taken: as *Joh.*1.11.—*His owne received him not*. and *Joh.*6.67. *Will* yee *alſo withdraw?* (as others did, queſtioning his doctrine, *verſ.* 60. *This is an hard ſaying, who can heare it?* 'twas no more.) 8. It hath *overthrown the faith of many*, firſt and laſt; occaſioned many to fall from *Heaven* to *Hell*, from ſound *Faith* to *Hereſie*. 9. If (through *Gods* great mercy) our judgements ſhould ever *fixe* and ſettle againe upon *Truth*, wee ſhall have the *leſſe thank* for it, and comfort in it: as *Thomas*, (*Ioh.*20.29.) *Becauſe thou haſt ſeen mee thou haſt beleeved.* (He would ſee cauſe,† and good Reaſon for his Faith, or not believe.) But ſaith *Chriſt*, *Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed*. 10. Laſtly, our bleſſed *Saviour* and his *Apoſtles*, (not onely declared and preacht againſt it, but *pray'd* againſt it, *earneſtly* on our behalfe. *For this cauſe I bow my knee*, ſaith * *Paul*, (as if he had no other *boon* to ask) that ye may be *ſtrengthned, rooted, grounded*. *The God of all grace ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you*, ſaith † *Peter*. But, above all, to over-heare *Jeſus Chriſt* praying, (*Joh.*17.7,11,12,15.) would *overcome* any *Chriſtian*-ſoule.——*Father, I have manifeſted unto them thy Name*,——*I have given them thy Word*,—— *and while I was with them in the World, I kept them in thy Name, and now I am no more in the world, but theſe are in the world, and I come to thee, holy Father keep them; I pray thee keep them from the evill*. And if there were nothing more to bee ſaid againſt this *queſtioning* of the great things of *God*, and doubtfull unſetlednes in matters of *Religion*, one would think this were enough.

c *In ipſa enim dubitatione ſacinus ineſt (ſcil.* de rebus manifeſtè honeſtis) *Quamobrem hoc quidem deliberantium genus pellatur è medio.* Cic. de Off.

† And ſo ſhould wee likewiſe have good ground for what wee beleeve: but from the Word of God, not from ſenſe or Reaſon, or other mens opinions.

* Eph.3.14, 16, 17.

† 1 Pet.5.8.10.

Object. We condemne the *Turks* and *Papiſts* for urging the Principles of their ſeverall *Religions* upon mens *beliefe*, without a liberty of *queſtioning* or *examining* them: and why then ſhould we require it for our *owne* Religion?

Anſw. Firſt, *Their* caſe and *ours* are not alike. For, the

Turks Religion is neither founded upon holy *Scripture* nor *Reaſon*: but upon the *Devices* of their wicked Impoſtor *Mahomet*; which containe ſuch things as (if it had not been propagated meerly by the *ſword*, and Military *policy*) Naturall *Reaſon* in every man might ſee cauſe ſufficient to *abhorre it*.

Neither hath the *Popery* of *Papiſts* any ground at all in *Scripture* or *Reaſon*: But the very *principles* thereof are *Irrationall* and contrary to the holy Scriptures. As that *every one ought to believe as the Church of Rome believes*. That *their Church* and *Pope cannot erre*. That the *Scriptures* (upon which they pretend their Church is partly founded) are *imperfect*, *obſcure*, *uncertaine*, *&c.* Whereas we ground *our* Principles upon cleare and manifeſt *Scriptures*, and *ſtand* wholly to their *judgement*: which (*Scriptures*) containe ſufficient to convince *Reaſon* that they are not of *mans* deviſing, but of *divine* Inſpiration; which the *Papiſts* themſelves know not how to deny. Yea, there be *Turks* alſo, not a few, that *acknowledge* as much, upon the matter, as *they*.

* Their Principles are crafty, and cunningly-ſuited to their *intereſt* and *ends*: but not rationall truths. And have their Foundation in mens *Corruptions*, not in right *Reaſon*.

But (ſecondly) we urge no *implicit beliefe* as they doe, but hold a *liberty* which *they* are bound up from. *viz.* To *give* forth our *grounds* for any principle wee hold, and to *receive* and *anſwer* doubts and *Objections* fairely made and propounded againſt it. And both theſe we allow, as well to thoſe that are *to receive* the truth of *Chriſtianity*, as that *have* received it: which *Turks* and *Papiſts* admit not of.

Object. But if wee meet with any *Points* that to our beſt underſtandings are *doubtfull*, and juſtly *queſtionable*, is it ſo hainous a thing to *doubt* of them, or *queſtion* them?

Anſw. Take, (by way of Anſwer) here, theſe *Concluſions* following.

I. All *Truth*, and every part thereof, is in *it ſelfe* very *cleare*, and free from *perplexity*. *Veritas veritati non eſt contraria.* There is no contrariety, no *interfering* of the parts of *Truth* one with another. But a perfect *harmony* and *orderly*-conſent (there is) in all the *members* and *branches* thereof.

II. All

II. All the *parts* and *branches* of Truth are *not* alike-clearly *manifested*. But are as the *Starres* in the *Firmament*, some, of the first *Magnitude*, and *strike* the *sense* with a more sparkling and lively *glory*: and some againe more *cloudy* and *obscure*, scarce discernible with *artificiall* helps and (*d*) *Instruments*. Some appeare *directly*, to the first *view*, like the uttermost *graines* or *boughes* of a *Tree*, whereof every knot and branch may be pointed out, described and followed with the *eye*: and other *truths* more *indirectly*, like the innermost boughs, which shew themselves a *little* here and there, yet are not to be surveyed any where with a *full* view, being shadowed behinde those which are more in *sight*. The Truths of God are some, *directly* laid downe, (*clearly seen and manifest*, Rom. 1. 19, 20) in the Naturall *Conscience* or *Scriptures*, or both; But then there be *others* that must be collected and extracted (by a naturall and *unstrained* use of Reason) from those that are more cleare: As necessary *consequents*, or by Rule of *Contraries*, *&c.* As in the Ten *Commandements*: If the Evill be *Negatively* forbidden, we are left to collect the *affirmative*, or duty commanded; *& contrà*.

III. As there is a great difference in the *manifestations* of *truths*, so likewise in the *Apprehensions* of men, to understand and conceive of Truth. And this is partly *Naturall*, partly (as wee may say) *Accidentall*. *Naturally*, our *capacities* and constitutions (aswell of *minde* as *body*) *differ* (*e*) in some singular and peculiar *property*: which determinates every man to be *himselfe*, and to *differ* from all beside himselfe. Some are *stronger*, some *weaker*, some more *capacious*, and some *narrow*; some more *acute* and quick to *apprehend*, others more *solid* and *judicious* to determine: some are naturally *curious*, vaine, confident floating, busie and unconstant: and others again more *serious*, modest, happy, well-tempered and reposed dispositions. Now the *same* Truths conceived in *severall* mindes, are as the same *metalls* in severall *moulds*. And so it will be; wee may as easily reduce mens *Faces* to an exact uniformity, as their *Fancies*: their *Bodies* as their *mindes*. There bee *Constitutions* that are naturally *incapable* of receiving some Truths both in Reli-

d And as the verity of Truths is not alike evident, so neither is the falsity of all Errours. There be *verisimilia* which yet wee know are not *vera*. Because their contraries are either expresly asserted in *Scripture*, or else underpropt with Reasons drawn from the inward *Essence* and nature of the things whereunto they belong.

e For admit that *soules* of themselves are all *equall* (which yet is questionable) yet the *capacity* is a result or product of the souls *accommodation*, as it is more or lesse fitted with an Organical body. Videatur *Il Theatro* (*de varie diversi cervelli*) *del* Garzoni.

Religion and Humane Learning. And the *adventitious* or preternaturall differences are as great and many: *viz.* by reason of *Ignorance* and *Learning*, *Barbarisme* and *Civility*, *Naturall* condition and *Regeneration*: Yea, the very degrees of Illumination and *Sanctification* doe greatly *diversifie* mens *understandings* of Truth. We might also adde the diversity of *Times* and *Administrations* which men live in or under; which are as different *Stations*, and *Mediums*, that prospect and represent the same things with much *variety*, even to *capacitie*: otherwise *equall*. (Let a dozen *Painters*, of equall skill, agree to take the Picture of the same person, and dispose themselves to severall distances, &c, and their *pieces* will all *differ*.) These differences are much mentioned in *Scripture*, There were (*a*) *Gergasens*, and (*b*) *Samaritans*, (*b*) *Athenians*, (*c*) *Cretians*, (*d*) *Bereans*, and (*e*) *Thessalonians*; Old Bottles and (*f*) New, *Spirituall* and *Carnall* (*g*) Understandings. Hearts *purged* of (*h*) Superfluities, and hearts *unpurged*. Enlightned, and blinded (by the God of this (*i*) World) Foure sorts of *ground*, and a great *deale* of *difference* in the *good*, both in (*k*) *receiving*, and *returning*, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred (*l*) fold. *Some* truths they *could* receive, *other*-some the *same* persons could *not*. *All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. But he that can receive it, let him, &c. Mat.* 19. 11, 12. And *Mark* 4.33. *Hee spake the Word to them as they were able to heare it.* (*m*)

a Mat. 8. 34.
b Joh 4 40.
c Act. 17. 21. 32
d Titus 1. 12.
e Acts 17. 11.
f Mat 9. 17.
g 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2 Heb. 5. 11. -- 14
h James 1. 21.
i 2 Cor. 4. 4, 6.
k Mat. 25. 15. & 13. 11.
l Mark 4 20.
m Rom. 14 1.

IV. In regard of such *unequall* manifestations, and Apprehensions of *Truth*, and *Errour*, it must needs follow, That many *Doubts* and *Questions* will *arise* in the mindes of men, concerning those things that are not so clearly manifested, or apprehended. Yet this, not from any *confusednes* in the branches of *Truth*, but from our *insufficiency* to discerne of it as it *is* †.

V. Although such Doubts, Questions, and Scruples doe most of all abound in Constitutions that are naturally weake, and in those of *childish* dispositions easily *tossed up and downe with every winde of* † *Doctrine*; as also in *Novices* and *Learners*; but chiefely and most dangerously in those who are *given up* to that distemper, and delivered *over* to Satan (to be buffeted

† *Sicut datur Minimum in rerum natura, sed non nisi ἀδυναμία τοῦ τέμνοντος, sic datur etiam ἄπορον, sed ἀδυναμία τοῦ λύοντος.*
† Eph. 4 14.

ted and ſhaken, or quite tranſported from the Truth;) And notwithſtanding ſome *Chriſtians* are more *ſtrong* and may goe *farther* than other ſome in a cleare comprehenſive *underſtanding* of Truth, Yet no mortall man is able to cleare, ſatisfie, and remove, *all* the *Incommoda*, perplexities, *Objections* and *Scruples* that may ariſe, or bee alleaged againſt *all* truths. For if *ſo*, our *knowledge* would be *perfect*, and like that of *God*; whereas *here* the moſt knowing know but in *part*.

VI. *When* ſuch *Doubts*, Objections or *Scruples* doe *ariſe* concerning any point of *Religion*, (whether of *Faith* or *practiſe*) whereby the judgement or Conſcience of a man is ſcrupuled and offended, they ought *not* to be *conceal'ed*; but may be lawfully *propounded*, and according to the *weight* of the Objections they may be *debated* and *urged*. Yet not without much *Caution*; in theſe particulars eſpecially. *Firſt*, *be ſure they bee Doubts indeed* and *rationall* Objections; not *froward* and malicious or paſſionat *Cavils*, for they are *unſatisfyable*, and therefore to be *rejected*, and *avoided*. (As in the diſpute between the *Arch-angell* and the *Devill*.) *Secondly*, *Let them not be propounded to every one*, to be judged or examined: but to *thoſe* that *God* hath furniſhed with the beſt *abilities* and gifts for the ſervice of his *Church* in the miniſtration of the *Goſpell*; (as the *Corinthians* adviſed with *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 1. And the *Diſciples* oft propounded their doubts to our *Saviour*, concerning his Doctrine. For the *divulging* of *doubts* and ſcruples without difference, to all, is but a ſubtile, ſlye and *indirect aſſaulting* of *Truth*. There being *many* of *capacity* to be *ſcrupled* with a colourable Objection, that are *not* of underſtanding enough to be *ſatisfied* with a ſufficient *Solution*, or Anſwer. Therefore the holy *Ghoſt* directs us, *not to receive the weak to doubtfull diſputations*, *Rom.* 14. 1. Many may be fit for communion with *Beleevers*, that are not fit to bee admitted to diſputations with Hereticks or *misbeleevers*: whoſe *words* (as they cunningly beſtow them, upon ſuch occaſions) doe often prove *infectious*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 17. For through the corruption of our Natures not only evill *words* corrupt good *manners*, but their *good* words and faire ſpeeches corrupt good *Principles*, *deceive the hearts*

Cautions concerning Doubts, Objections or Queſtions (in Religion) propounded.

1.

2.

of

of the ſimple, and *overthrow the Faith of ſome. Rom.* 16. 18. 2. *Tim.* 2. 18. 3. Thirdly, ſuch *Doubts* and *Objections* ought to be *propounded* and *urged with ſobriety, meekneſſe of Spirit, and reverence to the things of God*; and with a ſincere deſire to glorifie *God* in the diſcovery of his *Truth* and humble ſubmiſſion thereunto. *Not* with a proud *obſtinacy* and *confidence* in our owne conceits; not menaged with *animoſity, inſolency* and *contention* for *victory*. This *requiſite*, is ſo commonly *wanting* to *debates* of Religion, even among the *beſt*, that ſuch *undertakings* have *ſeldome* † ſorted to happy and *ſatisfying* iſſues: but as *God* hath pleas'd to uſe or *over-rule* the power, carnall Intereſt, or advantages of *men* (yea, and ſometimes their very paſſions and infirmities) to ſerve his Glory, and the good of his *Church*. For *either* (for the moſt part) wee yeeld to our *doubts* and ſcruples, *before* wee propound them, and *adopt* them for our *Opinions* (eſpecially if of our owne *conceiving*) and ſo ſtickle for them to the *laſt*: or elſe wee vainly *pretend* and *perſonate* ſcruples and *doubts*, as thinking our ſelves in ſome way *credited* by them, rather than ingenuouſly *propound* them. And the *deſigne* of *theſe* is, not ſo much to *receive* ſatisfaction, as to continue *unſatisfied*. For let the *Solutions* or Anſwers be never ſo *cleare*, full and *ſolid*, yet they would make you believe they *are not*, they *cannot* be ſatisfied. Their Queſtions are *endleſſe*, 1. *Tim.* 1. 4. 4. And the *fourth caution* may be this; *That the ſenſe of the holy Ghoſt in the Scriptures be acknowledged as the onely ſupreme Judge*, to whoſe deciſions and reſolutions wee ſhall *referre* all our *doubts*, queſtions and *Controverſies*, concerning the myſteries or duties of *Chriſtianity*. Otherwiſe we ſhall more ſafely *reject* them, than undertake to *ſatisfie* them with naturall Reaſon. The *Bereans* are *commended* for trying the *Apoſtles Doctrine* by *Scripture*. But *Nicodemus* is *not* commended that examined *Goſpel*-myſteries by *Reaſon*, *John* 3. 4, 9.

† Acts 15. 2.

4.

Obiect. But the *Scripture* ſaith, *Examine your ſelves whether ye be in the Faith*. And againe, *Every one that doth evill hateth the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved. But hee that doth truth commeth to the light that his deeds may be manifeſt.*

John 3. 20, 21.

uifeſt. And *Try all things, hold faſt that which is good:* What need Truth ſhun triall? &c.

Anſ. 1. Theſe *Scriptures* require *triall* of our *ſelves*, and of our owne *works*, by the *light* of *Gods* truth: not that the *Truth* of *God* ſhould be tryed by the *darknes* and uncertainty of our naturall *Reaſonings*; which are part of our owne *workes* to be *tryed.*

2. *Truths* may be *examined* and *proved*, and yet not in the leaſt meaſure *doubted* or *queſtioned.* As the *Bereans* firſt *receyved the Word with all readines*, and then *tryed* by the Scriptures, *Acts* 17.11. The beſt triall of *Truth* is by its *ſuitablenes* with it *ſelfe*: not by *complyance* or *non-complyance* with carnall *Reaſon.* The *Word* of God is the onely *Touch-ſtone* of *Truth*: try it you may, by *that*, rightly underſtood.

3. All *other* tryalls, on *our* part, are *unlawfull*; and ſuch as *Faith* muſt not *ſeek* for: for in *ſo* doing, we doe but lead our ſelves into *Temptation.* As of *Chaſtity*, and *fidelity* to man; ſo alſo of *Faith*, the beſt *triall* is to *avoyd* all tryall thereof (other than by the *Law* and *Rule*) where it *may* be avoyded.

4. All tryalls by *Reaſoning*, *Diſputings*, and hearkening after contrary *Opinions* and *Doctrines*, are not trialls of the *Faith*; but onely tryalls of *thy* faith: And when ever *God* thinks fit to *try* thee (whoever thou art) thy faith may have triall *enough.* Perhaps by grievous *Temptations*, buffetings of *Satan*, ſubtile ſiftings and *winnowings*; ſuch as if the ſtrength of *God* ſhould not *ſupport*, thy *faith* might utterly *faile*, though never ſo *true.* Or elſe by *Perſecutions*, cruell *mockings*, *ſcourgings*, *bonds*, *impriſonments*, fire and ſword. &c. And yet, even *theſe* are more ſafely encountred with than intricate and perplexed *diſputes.* Which that bleſſed *Martyr*, (a poore Woman in Queen *Maries* dayes) was ſenſible of, when ſhe *waved* the deceitfull Arguments of her *Inquiſitors*, ſaying; *She could not diſpute for Jeſus Chriſt and his Truth, but ſhee could dye for Him.*

So that, notwithſtanding what is *Objected*, it remaines a very cleare and firme *Truth*: That *Chriſtians* ſhould labour to bee *grounded*, fixed and *ſetled* in the *Faith* and Truth of *Chriſt*:

And that *Scepticisme*, and *uncertainty* in Religion, is one of the *Stratagems* of *Satan*; which of all good *Christians* ought to be avoided.

CHAP. XI.

Sundry hints given by way of advice *to the people of* God: *for their better* settlement *in the Truth, and securing themselves from the practises of seducing spirits, in these perillous times. Something also concerning Publick* Disputations *of matters of* Religion.

AS a *Corollary* to what hath been spoken (upon this *fifth* Observation) and by way of *Antidote* against the contagious and dangerous *disease*, of *Unsetlednes* and *Uncertainty* in matters of *Religion*, let me have leave to offer these following *Hints*, by way of *Counsel* and *Advice*, to those that desire to be found *faithfull* with *God*, sound in the *Faith*, and to *hold fast* that which is *good*.

1. *First*, *Pray much* to God, for his blessed *Spirit*, to lead us into all Truth, and to keep us therein; to *stablish*, *strengthen*, *settle us*: to *uphold our goings in his Word that our foot-steps slip not* (*a*). The carefull and constant performance of this Duty presents thee a three-fold Advantage. First, it is a *soule-setling* Ordinance: sweetly *composing* and *tuning* the harsh jarrings of the *thoughts* and *Heart* of man; And *scattering* the misty Clouds and *darknes* of the soule, by approaching into the presence of *God*. Therefore *David* (or the *Psalmist* whoever he was) *Psal.* 73. (*b*) being greatly *divided* and *bedarkened* in his thoughts, could no way satisfie or cleare his spirit, till hee came into the *Sanctuary*, *vers.* 16, 17. *When I thought to know this it was too painfull for me untill I went into the Sanctuary of God, and then I understood, &c.* And thereupon formes this *Experiment* into a *Rule* or *Canon*, *verse* 28. *It is good for me to draw neare to God.* The soule that is much with

(a) Psal. 17. 5.

(b) Psal. 73. 2. 13

Verse 16, 17. & 28.

God.

God in prayer, ſeldome departs farre from God in matters of *Opinion* and *Practice*. For *God* is *with* him; *guiding him by his Counſell, &c.* Secondly, ſearch, and yee ſhall finde it upon Record, that *Prayer* hath been a happy *preparative* to *receive* the Truth, (*Cornelius* will tell you ſo, *Acts* 10, 30.) and alſo a ſucceſſefull *Preſervative* of the Saints *in* the Truth. Witnes *David* in many of his (*c*) Pſalmes. Yea *Chriſt* himſelfe uſed it; for *Himſelf* (though full of the Holy *Ghoſt*) and for *Peter*, *Luke* 22. 31, 32. *I have prayed for thee that thy faith may not faile.*) And for us *all*, *Joh.* 17. And hath *adviſed* us to it, *Luke* 22. 40, 46. *Pray that ye enter not into temptation.* And therfore ye ſhall *obſerve*, that when Satan hath a *plot* upon our *Faith*, hee is exceeding buſie to take us off from *Prayer*. Whence it is, that the moſt unſetled *Skepticks* in Religion, and pretended *Seekers* of Truth, caſt off all *Ordinances*; but eſpecially they deſpiſe and *ſcorne* this *ſeeking* of God in *Prayer*. (A ſtrange *Soleciſme*! that profeſſed *ſeekers* of *Truth*, ſhould caſt off all ſeeking of *God*, in the wayes that he hath promiſed to be *found* in.) And this is the Third advantage we have by *Prayer*. We are brought under an expreſſe and ſpeciall *promiſe* of the *Spirit* of *Truth*, *which* (our *Saviour* tells us)* *God* will give forth to his people that ſeek it by *Prayer*, *more readily than a Father can give bread to his hungry children*: Therefore continue fervent in *Prayer*.

(c) Pſal. 17. 5. & 119. Verſ. 18, 27, 33, 43, 66, 73, 125, &c.

* Luke 11. 13.

Secondly, *Hold faſt to the written Word of God, and entertaine no Temptations, Objections, or Doubts, with the meere ſtrength or dexterity of thy owne Reaſon. Leane* not to thine owne * *underſtanding*, but acknowledge *God* in this Ordinance of his *Word*. In conflicts with the *old Enemy*, make uſe of that *old* and approved *weapon*, by which the *Saints* of *Old* ſo greatly foyld him. *By the Word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the Deſtroyer*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 17. 4. and, *Through thy Precepts I get underſtanding, therefore I hate every falſe way**. And our *Saviour*, who could eaſily have made a triumph of *Wit* over the *Devill* (if *that* had been *Gods* way) choſe the *ſword* of the *Spirit* to fight him with, and overcome him. For indeed (as *David* ſaid by *Goliah's*) *there's none to that.*

2.

* Prov. 3. 5.

* Pſal. 119. 104.

3. *Thirdly*, in the use of the Word and Prayer, *be sure to depend upon Iesus Christ, the great Prophet of his Church*, to teach, keep and settle thee in his *Truth*, by his *Spirit*. He onely is *able* for that purpose (*Iude* 24.) and he *will* doe it *. *I have not departed from thy judgements*, saith *David*) *for thou hast taught me*. *Psal.* 119.102.

* 2 Tim. 1.12.

Fourthly, wouldst thou bee established in the Truth? then *be carefull to glorifie God in a thankefull retaining of, and obedience to the Truths thou hast received*. If any man will *doe* his will, he shall *know* of the *Doctrine, whether it be of God, &c.* *Iohn* 7.17. Whereas they who when they *know God, glorifie him not as God, neither are thankefull*, become *vaine in their Imaginations*, and their *foolish heart is* * *darkened*. And they that *like not to retaine God in their knowledge*, are given over to a *minde void of judgement*. *Rom.* 1.28. And likewise 2 *Thes.* 2. 10 11.

* Rom. 1.21. & Vers. 28. ἐπιδόκιμον νοῦν There's an Elegancy in the whole verse beyond all possibility of being translated.

Fifthly, He that would rightly informe himselfe of Truth and Duty, in *particular* points, must have a cleare and comprehensive knowledge of the *Generall* and unchangeable *Rules* and directions of the *Word*. For as *Cicero* saith of Morall Justice, that *there are certaine Foundations* of Right and Righteousnes, (1. *ut ne cui noceatur*, 2 *ut communi utilitati serviatur*. *To mischiefe no man*, To have a care of the *Weale-Publicke*, &c) which in some *cases*, and at some times, may and ought to put *by*, and dispense with, the most received Rules of *particular* duties, (*suum cuique*; *reddatur depositum*; *fiat promissum*, *&c.*) for in case of *frenzie*, or upon discovery of some wicked *enterprise*, on his part to whom such particular *rights* belong, it may be mischievous and *unjust* to *performe* that which otherwise were but *just* and *due* †: In like manner we may truely say of *Religion*, There are certaine *Foundation*-truths, certaine *Regimentall* standing-Rules; of *Doctrine* and *Practice*, which (as *fixed* lights of the *first* magnitude) have an *Imperiall* influence upon all *particular* Orders and commands of the *Word* whatsoever; in some cases to *extend* them, and in others again to *suspend* and *disauthorize* them.

† *Incidunt sæpe tempora, cùm ea, quæ maximè videntur digna esse justo homine, eoq; quem virum bonum dicimus, commutantur, stantq; contraria: ut non reddere depositum, etiamne furioso promissum facere, quæq; pertinent ad veritatem, & ad fidem, ea negare interdum & non servare sit justum. Referri enim debet ad ea, quæ posui, fundamenta justitiæ — Ea cùm tempore commutantur, commutatur Officium.* Cic. de Offic. l. 1.

And by these we intend not onely *Principia constitutiva*, the *grounds*

grounds of *Religion*, or *first Principles of the Oracles of God*, (as the *Apostle* stiles them, *Heb.* 5. 14.*) which are the most *materiall* and principall ingredients of the *body* of *Divinity*, (contained in the *Creeds*, *Confessions* of Faith, or *formes* of *Catechisme*; which yet being well *known*, as from the Scriptures, are of marvellous *advantage*.) But we meane especially those *Principia explicativa, regulativa, & Didactica*, certain generall clear *hints* and lights, which the holy *Ghost* gives in holy *Scripture*, to guide and *regulate* our *Judgements* and *practice* by, in reference to all *other* things revealed.

* Heb. 5. 14. Τῶν τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ Θεοῦ.

These, in the *practicall* part of *Christianity*, are as it were Gods Orders of *Chancerie*, interpreting the true scope or end of his particular *Statute-Lawes*, and moderating the *letter* of them (according to the diversity of Times and Cases) to his true intent and *meaning* in them. And they are such as these: *I will have mercy and not* (a) *Sacrifice. Let all things be done to* (b) *Edification.*——*The end of the Commandement is love*, or (c) *charity.*——*Whatsoever is not of faith* (not done with a beliefe that it is lawfull) *is* (d) *sinne.*——That *we are to follow after the things which make for Peace.* And hee *that in Righteousnes and Peace, and joy in the holy Ghost, serveth Christ, is acceptable to God &c. Rom.* 14. 17, 18, 19. That *things offensive, should be avoided, though otherwise* (e) *lawfull.* These and the like *Canons* are but *collected*: but other-like may be also *extracted*, from unquestionable *examples* in which they are imbodied. As, that *the substance of Gods worship must not be laid aside, or throwne off, for some defects in circumstances*: from the practice of (f) *Hezekiah*, (g) *Ezra, &c.*

a Hos. 6. 6. & Mat. 9. 13. & ch. 12. 7.
b 1 Cor. 14. 26.
c 1 Tim. 1. 5. Rom. 13 8 9.
d Rom. 14. 5, 23.
e Rom. 14. 14, 21.
f 2 Chron. 30. 18.
g Ezra 3 2, 3.

In like manner, there be certaine *Theorems* or Instructions, (some formally *expressed*, and other-some necessarily *implyed* in sundry passages of *Scripture*) that are of *generall* use, for the discovery preserving and limiting of particular *Doctrinall* truths, or matters in Christianity to be *believed*. As that, *There is no other* personall *foundation to be laid, but Iesus Christ.* (a) *neither is there salvation in any other.* Acts 4. 12. That all the *holy Scriptures are written for our learning*: and *must be fulfilled.* That *the Counsells of God are unsearchable*, (for depths;)

a 1 Cor. 3. 11.

and his wayes past our *finding out* (*b*). That however wee cannot, by the strength of Reason, *compose* those seeming ἀτοπα, and *incongruities* that appeare to us, Yet *God is righteous in all his* (*c*) *sayings, and holy in all his doings*; That *the wisdome of this world is foolishnes with God*, 1 *Cor.* 21. 23,24. and *Chap.* 2. 6,7. and *Chap.* 3. 19. That *the Fathers (before the Incarnation of God) were saved by Jesus Christ even as* (*f*) *wee.* That the *Substance of the Gospell is contained* in the holy Writings of the *Old* (*g*) *Testament*; And the *Apostles* preached *no other things, &c. Acts* 26. 22, 23. That *the Covenant of grace exhibited by Christ is the very same that was promised to Abraham, Gal.* 3. 8, 16.--18. And the *Law*, or *Old Covenant*, was but *added to that Promise, till the Covenant promised should bee accomplished by* (*h*) *Christ.* That the *Law was not given to* (*i*) *justifie, but to lead, bring, or drive us to Christ*, by the discovery of *Sin* and the *Curse*, as also of the *Sacrifice* for sin, that *Christ* was to offer, and to *shadow* out those good things to come. That *the Iewish Church before Christ, and the Churches of the Gentiles since, are branches of one and the same* (*k*) *Olive-tree*; That as *Abraham had a carnall and spirituall seed of old, so also now* * : and in *Christ* † there be dead *unfruitfull branches*, as well as true *living branches, Ioh.* 15 2. That *whatsoever Doctrine consents not with the words of our Lord Iesus Christ, or is not according to godlinesse, is corrupt, and ought to bee* (*l*) *rejected.* That *the Doctrine and writing of the Apostles* (*m*) *are for ever to be retained, &c.*

But we intended no *Induction* or *Register* of them (though certainly such a businesse were very well worth the time and pains of such as the *Lord* should fit for it) but only a few *patternes*; and those not *all* the most *principall*, but onely such as came *readily* to hand; that so the *Reader* may truely understand what is intended: Namely, that there be certaine generall *Intimations* delivered and laid down here and there in holy *Scriptures*, which are of a peculiar and speciall faculty and use, for the *governing* and *Regulating* of Judgement and Conscience, in particular matters of *Faith* and *Practice*. Which may not unfitly be stiled, the *Ballast of Religion*, or the *Compasse* for a *Christian*

b Rom. 11.33, 34.

c Rom. 3.4.

f Acts 15.11. 1 Cor. 10.3,4.

g 1 Pet. 1,10, 11,12.

h Gal. 3.17,19

i Verse 21.

k Rom. 11.17.

* Gal. 3.7.27. and chap. 4.28, 29.

† That is, in the *Church* which is the Body of *Christ*.

l 1 Tim. 6.3, 4, 5.

m Acts 2.42. Eph. 2.20. Heb. 6. 1. 2 Joh. 9. 10. 1 Joh 4 5,6.

Didactica Christiana, Religionis (quasi) saburra, & acus nautica. Claves mysterii, &c.

Chriſtian to ſteere his *courſe* by; or elſe the *Keyes of the myſterie of godlineſſe, &c. Pillars* and *Stayes* of *Truth* and *Duty*: Whoſe powerfull *Influence* upon ſome *particular* Doctrines and Commands of the *Word*, is very viſible at this day; even to the *aboliſhing* and removing of the Obſervation of them with one conſent out of the *Churches*. As, concerning *eating of things ſtrangled*, and of *blood*; as alſo the Primitive *Order* of *Widowes*, &c. change of the *Sabbath day*, &c. And were they judiciouſly *collected**, well *underſtood*, and carefully *improved*, they might *help* out at many a *pinch* and *dead-lift*; might ſatiſfie and remove many of thoſe *Doubts* and *Objections*, which ſcruple the mindes of *many*, and which keep them in a poſture of *unſetledneſſe* in matters of *Religion*. But, to proceed.

* As 'tis like they are, though unknown to me; for it cannot be thought, that a buſines of ſuch concernment ſhould eſcape thoſe many Worthies that have written; for, *Nihil ſub ſole novum: nec valet quiſquam dicere, ecce hoc recens.*

Sixtly, Doe not lay *Gods Truth* or thine *owne ſoule* to ſtake upon a try all for *maſtery* (with the Devill or any of his Inſtruments) in *ſubtilty* or *ſophiſtry*. Diſpute not with them upon theſe termes, *that if thou art not able to maintaine it by Argument, thou wilt relinquiſh thy tenure.* Many a *Free-holder* is ſure and certaine his *eſtate* is *good*, who yet cannot *plead* it at the *Barre*. Therefore if at any time thou be urged to anſwer *Objections* and ſubtile *cavills* againſt the *Truth*, be ſure to enter a *caution* or *proviſo*; That if thy *abilities* ſhould *not ſerve* thee to *anſwer* and cleare all that may be *objected*, yet thy *weaknes* ſhall *not* at all *prejudice* the *Truth* of God: which is never a whit the leſſe *true* if there were not a *man* in the world able to open his mouth *for* it. For hee that ingageth to relinquiſh his *beliefe* as ſoon as hee is gravell'd with an *Argument* (as ſome *have*) wageth both his *Faith* and *Soule*, that he is a ſubtler *Sophiſter* than *Satan*. Therefore,

Seventhly, if ſtagger'd and ſhaken with any *Argument* or *Objection*, take time to *conſider* of it; to conſult with thy own *Conſcience*, and the *Word* of *God*; with *God* himſelfe (by Prayer) and good men (by *conference*) about it. But *Seducers* like not this; being all for *diſpatch*, and ſerving their turns of certain *Scripture*-formes* for that purpoſe: And by this trick the *Papiſts*, and thoſe they call *Anabaptiſts* have engaged not a few to their way. 7.

* Gal. 1. 16. Acts 16. 33.

Eightly,

Eightly, Having taken *time*, faile not to *advise* with *godly-learned* and judicious Christians, concerning those matters that so shake thy *judgement*; Despise not those in *this* case (whatever it bee) by whom the *Lord* hath spoken to thy *soule* in *other* cases, and (it may be) *greater*. For want of *this*, divers that have been worsted by *Seducers*, and stood a while *deliberating* and pausing (as if they would doe nothing *unadvisedly*) have yet at length drencht themselves as deep in *Error* as who deepest, because they have onely *consulted* with *themselves*; or, if they have also *prayed*, they *neglected* other *meanes* of right information and establishment: lying (all the while) under the continuall *droppings* of *seducing* spirits and *seduced*; who *hinder* them (all they may) from a cleare opening of their hearts, to such as *God* hath enabled *to preserve knowledge*, and *to speake a word in due season to him that is weary*.

Lastly, wee shall doe well also to *enquire*, and informe our selves, *whether any have gone that way of old*, that thou art now *going-off* into: *Who* they were; of what *Spirits* and *Dispositions*: how they *carryed* themselves; and whether they *fixed* and *rested* in such their *Opinions*: or whether they *ran* not *out* farther (from one strange *Doctrine* to another) till at length they wheeld-about to manifest *Blasphemy*, or desperate *Atheisme* and *prophanes*. Consider also, how they *sped*; and how farre *God* appeared either *with* them, or *against* them. This is a consideration of great *weight* with the *Apostle*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5,6. And therefore let us take heed of those *wayes* (and *steps* or *gradations*) that have misguided *others* to such unhappy *Proceeds*, and desperate *Conclusions*. Thus by way of *Advice*, for *Prevention*, *&c.*

Object. In your Discourse (upon *this* point) you have spoken divers times of *FUNDAMENTALLS* in Religion: which you say should not be questioned, nor *suspected*. But you tell us not *what* Points are *Fundamentall*.

Answ. That there *be* such *Foundation-truths* in the Spirituall *building*, is most cleare from the *Scriptures* above mentioned; *Heb.* 5. 12. and *chap.* 6. 1. and sundry other *places*. And to

state

ſtate or *determine* preciſely *which* they be (in Particulars) were a thing much to be *deſired*, if well-*performed*. Towards which, we ſhall onely offer *this*.

Truths may be ſaid to be *Foundationall*, in a *Three-fold* Conſideration. 1. Either in reſpect of their *abſolute neceſſity* to the *ſalvation* of man: ſuch as without the knowledge and beliefe whereof, we hold it *impoſſible* for *any* perſon of underſtanding (living under meanes of grace) to be *ſaved*. As, *That the Lord Jeſus ſuffered death for the ſalvation of ſinners, that believe in his Name, &c.* And theſe are not *many* (that are of *abſolute* neceſſity) though not *ſo* very few as the *Socinians* would make them †. Or, ſecondly, they are *Fundamentall* in reſpect of their *Order* or *Place* in the *frame* of Gods revealed *Counſells*. As, *the fall of all mankinde in Adam*, is a *Foundation* in reſpect of the *Redemption* by *Jeſus Chriſt*. Or elſe (Thirdly) they may be *Foundation*-truths in reſpect of *our Knowledge*, and *Learning*; as they are neceſſary to be *firſt*-known and believed of us, *before* we can attaine to the true knowledge and beliefe of *other* Truths: as, *That the holy Scriptures are the VVord of God. That the happineſſe of man conſiſts in communion with God, and enjoying him for ever, &c.* Now the *Foundations* that we have *ſpoken* of (as not to be queſtioned) are the *plaine, neceſſary* and cleare *Diſcoveries* of the *Word* that are *Fundamentall* in *any* of theſe three *reſpects* laſt mentioned,

Object. Fundamentall truths may be lawfully *diſputed*: for ſo they were by *Paul* and other the *Apoſtles*. Therefore they may be lawfully *queſtioned*. ‖

Anſ. This offers occaſion to ſpeake ſomething of an *Inſtrument* growne very *cheap* and *common* now adayes, *viz. Diſputes* concerning *Religion*, which indeed deſerves to be *conſidered* of by it *ſelfe*: But ſince we ſhall not *now* advance ſo farre as to ſpeak of it in its more proper *place*, take theſe few thoughts of it *here*, With reference to the *Objection*.

Firſt, we meddle not at all here (more or leſſe) with *Scholaſtick* Diſputations, for the *training* up and *Exerciſe* of Students in *Divinity*; that they may be the more able and ready to encounter with *Adverſaries* (of all ſorts) that oppoſe the Truth,

† It is probable that the *Abſolutely neceſſaries* to ſalvation may (in ſome ſort) be *more* or *fewer*, according to the different gradations of *Light* revealed. For that knowledge may bee competent for *ſome*, which is not ſufficient for *other*-ſome. (And ſo, of *beliefe* and *obedience*.)

(and beat them at their owne weapons.) But we speake of *serious* and solemne *Disputations* for the *tryall* of Truth (in any point of Religion) by the strength of *Arguments* raised from some certaine *Principles*, (either of *Scripture*, *Reason*, or *Authorities*) unto which both sides pretend to *adhere* and *appeale*.

2. The *Truth* of any points of Religion (especially such as are most materiall and *fundamentall*) may, and *ought* upon all occasions to be *defended*; and *assaults* made against the same, *opposed*, by the uttermost strength of Reason and *Argument*, (in Disputations) by those whom *God* hath *fitted* and *called*-out to such service: with speciall regard had to those *Regimentall* and *Imperiall* rules of the *Word* (before spoken of) *Let all things be done to Edification, &c.* So *Paul* and *Barnabas* Disputed with *Jewish* Opposers, and *Hereticall* Depravers of *Christianity*: being *extraordinarily* enabled and set-apart by the holy *Ghost* for the *defence of the Gospel*; furnished and *fitted* for that service.

Truth may be *defended*, when yet it is farre from being *questioned*.

3. In doubtfull *Controversies* about matters of weight and concernment, to have the *things* in-question sincerely, meekly and wisely *debated*, by *able* and *judicious* men, is of marvellous *advantage* for the *satisfaction* of those that are of *large* capacities and understandings; *able* and *free* to discerne and judge of what is produced *for* and *against* the matter so questioned.

4. But such *Disputes* of matters in Religion are *seldome* managed with such *requisites*, (*viz.* meekenesse, sincere desire after Truth, &c.) but for the most part, with extreme *confidence*, *animosity*, *ostentation*, tartnesse or *bitternesse* of spirit, *insolency* of carriage, *passionate* provocations, or *close* and ambiguous *affronts* (if not *uncivill* taunts) to the *adverse* party, mutually. In a word, such *conflicts* are commonly with *carnall* weapons; either *passion* and *harshnes* (which are the lesse-dangerous because *discernible*) or else with *subtilty* and *stratagem*, lying upon the *catch* for advantages, &c. And *seldome* is it seen, that either *Disputants* or *Moderators* carry it with that unbyassed *sincerity* and *impartiality* that they ought in *publick*, solemn,

ſolemn, ſet *Diſputations*: which are oftener undertaken upon *Deſigne* or *Neceſſity* (even by the *ableſt* men) than made *choice* of, as the *fitteſt* and likelieſt expedients to *determine* Controverſies, and *ſettle* the Truth: (*unleſſe* the errour hath been ſo *ranke* and groſſe, as that the publick *owning* and pleading for it might procure *Deteſtation* from all the hearers) Nor have Controverſies been uſually *decided* by ſuch Diſputes, without the additionall force of *Authority*.

5. The *triall* of *Doctrines* by ſome certaine *Diſputations* and Debates of *particular* men (though fairely, equally and *regularly* managed) is but as the *Deciding* of a *Quarrell* by a *Duell*, or *bodily*-combate. For as this is but to *wage* the *juſtice* of each mans cauſe upon his owne *courage*, *ſtrength*, *skill* and *ſucceſſe* in that *bodily* conflict: So in *Diſputation*, the *Credit* or *Truth* of a *Tenet* or *Opinion* is *ingaged* upon the mans *parts*, his *acuteneſſe* of wit, quickneſſe of *fancy*, readineſſe of *memory*, felicity of *expreſſion*, *&c.* and upon the *preſentneſſe*, or readineſſe of all *theſe* juſt at *that* time: which *depends* much upon the *Conſtitution* and *Diſpoſition* of his *body*, and alſo of externall *accidents* and occaſions. For, let a man in the time of ſuch an Exerciſe bee *ſurpriz'd* with ſome bodily *indiſpoſition*: or let his preparations be *diſturbed* with ſome ſuddain *Croſſe* or *Affliction*, or with ſome troubleſome *occaſions* emergent, and the *Influence* of thoſe ſhall be eaſily *perceived* in his *Diſpute*, let his *cauſe* bee never ſo *good*, and his *abilities* never ſo *ſufficient*. And is it not a *hard caſe* if the *Eſtimation* of Gods *Truth* muſt *ſtand* or *fall* with my Advantages or *Diſadvantages* (of my Adverſary) in reſpect of ſuch matters as *theſe*? But if yee ſpeak of any *appeale* to Gods *providence* concurring; ſo there would bee if we ſhould agree to caſt *Lots*, whoſe Opinion ſhould bee reputed the *Truth*.

6. Such *Diſputes* to the *weaker* ſort are ever very *dangerous*: who, as hath been ſaid, are of *capacity* enough to bee *ſcrupuled* with a ſubtile and *ſophiſticall* Argument, (eſpecially in things that are not *ſenſible*, but *Notionall*) and yet not

of judgment enough to diſcerne the *Fallacies* of ſuch Arguments, though fully and truely *diſcovered*. Whereof wee have *experience* even in *ſenſible* things; concerning which, when *Fallacious* Arguments are brought, they have no other *Anſwer* or evaſion, but onely to *deny* the *Concluſion*. And of this, both *Proteſtants* and *Papiſts* (in other parts) are now growne very ſenſible. Who have been *formerly* very *forward* in provoking each other, to try the *Points* in Controverſie betwixt them by formall *Diſputations*: but at length are grown ſo *wiſe* on both ſides, that (though ſtill as ready to give Challenges as formerly, yet) neither *ſide*, by their good will, will admit of ſuch *Diſcuſſions*, unleſſe it may be in the *Cities* or *Churches* of the *adverſe* party. The *Papiſts* would *diſpute*, but among the *Proteſtants*: and the *Proteſtants* are moſt deſirous to enter the liſts and grapple with them, provided it may be but among the *Papiſts*. As Sir *Edwin Sandys* in his *Europæ Speculum* (a *Booke* farre above our Commendation) wiſely obſerves; *Each man* (ſaith hee) *being content that the Fire ſhould bee kind'ed rather in his Enemies Houſe than his owne.* The *vulgar* ſort being much *ſhaken* and unſetled in their beliefe of what they hold, by imagining thoſe things to become *doubtfull* (through a vigorous *Oppoſition* of plauſible *Arguments* on both ſides) which before they thought *unqueſtionable*. And therefore the *Apoſtle* would not have the the *weake* admitted *to doubtfull diſputations*, * *viz.* leſt they ſhould ſoone bee *removed* (as the *Galatians* were upon the like occaſion) *unto another Goſpell* †. And therefore it is, that when they have gained (by diſputes or reaſonings) on the *vulgar*, they are carefull to keep them from farther *Diſputes*, with thoſe that they are ſaine off from. Becauſe they know, that by *Diſputes* men are ſooner *ſhaken* into *Skepticiſme*, and *unſetledne* in the things they have learn'd before, than any way *confirm'd* and emproved in their *Tenets*.

The *Papiſts* queſtionleſſe would be very glad of a liberty to diſpute their Religion freely and openly in *England*, but would be loth to accept or admit it in *Spain*.

* Rom 14.1.
† Gal. 1. 6.

So that by this that hath been ſpoken wee may partly *perceive*, what the *Plot* and *Drift* is, of theſe *Emiſſaries* (of the laſt *Edition*) among us that move up and downe (like

wan-

wandring-ſtarres) from place to place, offering and urging *Diſputes* with any that differ from them: when as *many* of them are ſo unacquainted with the unqueſtionable *Lawes* of Diſputation or *Argument*, that they are *unconvincible* of any *Abſurdity*; Being alſo wholly *ignorant* of the *Originall* Languages of the *Scriptures*, and ſo *uncapable* of being *convinced* when they moſt groſſely miſapply Scripture-*phraſes* and *Expreſſions*. Their *Deſigne* muſt needs lye (or *Satans* above them) in ſome of *theſe* things. Either 1. to *perſwade* the multitude to an *Opinion* of their *ſoundneſſe*, becauſe they are ſo importunate for *audience*, and confident to abide the hazard of ſuch *trialls*. Or 2. to have *opportunities* to *inſinuate*, with their good words and faire ſpeeches into the hearts of the *ſimple*: who (they know) are ſoone wrought upon * to *diſrelliſh* any thing that hath formerly *bridled* their *Extravagancies*: and are ready to entertaine any *novelties* that ſeem to bring with them any plauſible *advantages*: (eſpecially ſuch as give *liberty* of ſinne and *Corruption*, together with confident *perſwaſions* of acceptableneſſe with *God.*) Or elſe 3. That they may *weaken* the *Reputation* of *Truth* (with thoſe that are leſſe grounded) by an impudent *Oppoſition* thereof, under the *pretence* of *Zeale* and *Holineſſe*. Juſt as ſome notorious *Mountebank* upon a publique *Stage*, who prates and *rants* it at ſuch a rate, as if the greateſt *Doctors* and *Profeſſors* of *Phyſick* were but a company of dull *Knaves* or *Fooles* in Compariſon with *him*: and who by his impudent and *ſubtile Language* and *behaviour*, will ſo prevaile upon the undiſcerning *multitude*, that the ableſt *Phyſician* in a Kingdome ſhall not undertake him in publick, without hazarding the cenſure of being *baffled* and *worſted*.

* *Mobilicus turba Quiritium Fluctuq; magis mobile vulgus.*

In conſideration (therefore) of what is *premiſed*, it muſt needs bee yielded, that the many irregular *Diſputes*, that are ſo much in uſe now adayes (by provocation of *Itinerant* or *vagrant* Seducers) are to be computed amongſt the *Devices* & *Stratagems* of *Satan*; whereby hee practiſeth to weaken the *Truth*, and to gaine advantages to his Helliſh *Intereſt*. And therefore, our *part* would rather be, to *eſtabliſh* people in the

Truth, and fortifie them againſt *Errour* by ſound and painfull *preaching*, and private *conference*, rather than gratifie the humour of *Mountebanks* in *Religion*, by accepting every impudent *Challenge*. Reſerving our ſelves in readineſſe for all *opportunities* that Providence ſhall offer, whereby reall *Service* may be done to the *Goſpell* of *Chriſt*, in the *Edification* of his *Church*. Which will hardly ever be done by *Diſputes*, unleſſe the Solemnity and *Preſence* were *ſuch*, as might *awe* the *Inſolencies* and *Extravagancies* of thoſe that by ſhifting tricks and *jugling* practices, are wont to abuſe the *Simple*.

But if they will needs be *trying* by *Argument*, to oppoſe received *Truths*, let them lay downe their *Arguments* in *writing*; and let them receive Anſwers accordingly, with as much *appoſitneſſe*, *brevity* and *plainneſſe* as the nature of the *Subject* will beare.

CHAP XII.

The Sixth *Obſervation. How Satan labour's to introduce and eſtabliſh certaine* Principles, *which are abſolutely* oppoſite *to* Gods *declared counſells and purpoſes: and which alſo* comprehend *or make* way *for All manner of* Evills *in* Opinion *and* Practice.

HAving been ſomething *larger* upon ſome of the *former* Heads (which indeed are of largeſt *concernment*) than was *intended*; the *roome* ſo narrowes upon us now, that wee muſt of neceſſity be more *abrupt* than would be deſired. But look *back* now, I beſeech you upon the *Practiſes* before mentioned, and yee ſhall perceive, how *Satan* (with all ſubtilty and diligence) hath (by *them*) opened and cleared his *way* to his *work*. How he hath buſied and employ'd himſelf in *making* and *fitting* his *Inſtruments* [*profeſſed Saints:*] As alſo in *providing*, and furniſhing them with *Mate-*

Materialls [*New Lights*:] in contriving and emproving the fittest *Opportunities* and *Seasons*, to colour and further his *Busines* [*Times of Reformation*, and of *common calamities*] yee may see likewise what *paines* he takes (*removere prohibens*) to *remove* out of his way, or at least to obstruct and weaken, that which probably might *frustrate* his undertakings [*viz. The WORD of God*] As also to *undermine* shake and *shatter* in pieces the good old *building* of True *Religion*, in the severall *parts* thereof; that it may have no fixed *Foundation* in the *Consciences* of men; but bee *swallow'd*-up (piece-meale) into that monstrous *Vacuum*, or bottomlesse *Gulfe* of *Scepticisme* and *uncertainty*, under pretence of *Scruples*, *Queries*, *Doubts*, *Questions*, *Disputes*, &c.

And now in the *next* place we should *Observe* how he falls to worke with his *owne* Building. What *Foundations* hee layes, what *superstruction* he reares, with what chosen-*pieces* he *heads* his *Corners*, what false *lights* hee beats out, with what *Artifice* he *workes*, and with what *cement* he *binds* together the manifold *heterogeneall* parts of his dark and Hellish *Fabrick*. But *this* wee must here (needs) fall *short* of, and but give a few *hints* and *glances* of what was *intended*.

But first of all let me *premise* this (to prevent *mistakes*) That *Satan confines himselfe to no particular fixed principles or practises, further than they conduce to his ends*, or *serve his present turnes*; by them (as *Bridges*) to passe over to some *Designe* that lyes *beyond*: which, when hee has *done*, hee can *cut off* and break in pieces, that they be not made use of to his disadvantage. Thus he doth by some things already *mentioned*, and by some likewise that should now come to bee *propounded*. It is *Gods* Royalty to bee *semper idem* *; it is the *Devills* cognisance to bee alwayes *shifting* and *changing* †. Shortly, and most *plainly*, ye may example it *thus*. An over-curious questioning of some things appertaining to *Religion* (against which yet I conceive, no cleare evidence can be given) disposeth to *Seperation*: *Seperation* is an ordinary step to *Anabaptisme*; *Anabaptisme* perfects it selfe in *Seeking*, being above *Ordinances*, and *Questioning* every thing revealed in the *Scrip-*

* Thou art the same, &c. Psal. 102, 27. I the Lord change not. Mal. 3. 6.

† 2 Cor. 11. 14.

Scriptures, and in high *Raptures* and *Revelations*. *This* determinates in *Levelling*, and (through that) runne's *compaſſe* (with ſome) to that ſtrange and fearfull *ſtraine* declared and taught in the late *Fiery flying Roll*; which ſtate's the *perfection* of all Religion expreſly [*in perfect Libertiniſme*] So that Profaneſs ye may perceive, is the Devils *Alpha* & *Omega*. For *there* Religion firſt findes us; and (if we ſuffer *him* to miſguide our *Religion*) *thither* he will be ſure againe to *bring* us. Now this is moſt certaine, That when a Soule is *miſguided* to any of the above-mentioned, as it tranſports it ſelfe to the *next* ſtage *beyond*, and preſſeth on to that which is *before*, ſo it extreamly *deſpiſeth* and ſlighteth that which is *behinde*; vilifying and *decrying* the ſteps and *degrees*, by which it *aſcended* to that *cuſpe* of imaginary perfection, wherein it conceits it ſelfe *culminating*. For *Satan* acts not-much-unlike your *Machiavelian* Statiſts; that *abandon* and *reſume* the ſame *things* (upon ſeverall *pretences*) as they diſcerne them to *impede* or *aſſiſt* their *plots* and *deſignes*: carefully *demoliſhing* the *Fortifications* by which themſelves have wonne the *Towne*, leſt they ſhould happen (by *them*) againe to *loſe* it. And therefore *wonder* not if hee or his Inſtruments ſeeme to throw *downe* that ſometimes which they had carefully *raiſed*, or to repaire that which they had demoliſhed; (neither, for *this*, bee too forward to *charge* them with *changed* Intentions:) for it is ordinary with *Satan* to run *counter*, and *double*; thereby to amuſe ſuch as would *trace* him, and to repoſe himſelfe and his Inſtruments, the *more* ſecurely, in their deep Deſignes and *Stratagems*. This Hint premiſed, wee now proceed to *mention* (though we can *but* mention) ſome *few* of thoſe *many* dangerous *Principles*, which (being abſolutely *contrary* to Gods revealed *Counſells* and *Purpoſes*, or of a *radicall* and generall *influence* upon the *wayes* of men) might be called *Magnalia Satana*, the great ſtayes and *Pillars* of that frame of *Darkneſſe* which the Devill is buſily raiſing in this erroneous *age*: or the *roots* that feed and nouriſh the many ſpreading and fruitfull *branches* of *Hereſie* and *Prophaneſſe*. But (ſtill I ſay) wonder not if ſome of them ſeeme to *interfere*, or bee inconſiſtent; For there is (you know)

know) a mystery of Iniquity in these depths of Satan, *viz.*

1. *That the soule of man is mortall*, as is his *body*, whereof some (that so hold) acknowledge a *Resurrection*: others deny *that* also; and further say,

2. *That there is no other heaven nor hell but a mans owne Conscience here in this life.* Some againe,

3. That *all mankinde, yea and devills too, at last shall be saved.*

4. *That whatsoever is*, (be it Sensible or Intelligible) *is God; and whatsoever is done in the world, is done by God*; be it good or evill; punishment or *Sinne.*

5. That *it is a high degree of Christian emprovement for a man not to trouble himselfe at the sinnes of others, although they act as bad as the devill himselfe.* Whereas *Moses, David, Nehemiah, Jeremiah, Paul* and *Christ* himselfe expressed a quite contrary disposition; and much laid to heart the *sinnes* of the times, who yet were as well acquainted with the *Nature* and *extent* of the Divine *Decrees* as any *now* can be.

6. That *the Fall of man was not destructive, but perfective of the Image of God upon man.* There's a large *Treatise* out in justification of this *Opinion*: and it goes for a glorious *sparke* of new *light.*

7. That *Revelations of the Spirit are to be preferred before the Scriptures, even in things that differ from the clear sense of the Scriptures*: and that such Revelations are *ordinary with the Saints in these times.* Truth it is, the pretence of Revelations hath *instrumented* and *assisted* great Designes for Civill-*changes*, first and last. Witnes *Numa Pompilius, Mahomet*, the holy maid of *Kent, &c.*

8. That *Divine providence may prescribe Duty, and bee a Warrant or Rule of action, in matters of highest concernment*, though they bee (seemingly) contrary to *Scripture*-rules and examples. (That is, for *themselves* that so hold when *providence* seems to bee *for* them: *not* for *others*, when *providence* takes against them.) That was the Divinity of the Sons of *Zerviah*: but not *David's Rule*, 1 *Sam.*26.8. And indeed it is the best and greatest *plea* that the *Mahumetans* at this day pretend 1 Sam. 26. 8.

pretend for *their* Religion. *God* (say they) *with an Almighty hand from heaven hath approved it*, with invincible prevailings against the *Christians, &c.* Whereas if that were a good *Rule*, the *Devils* are as *obedient* Creatures as the blessed *Angels* in heaven: And the *Jewes* in crucifying *Christ*, and *Judas* in betraying him, were as dutifull as the *Disciples* in *believing* on him: for they did *onely that*, and *all that* which the hand and counsell of *God* had *determined* before to bee done *.

* Acts 4 28.

9. That *the Children of professed Christians are not to be baptized.* It troubles the Devill much that *Children* (from their Infancy) should be under an *engagement* to receive nurture and admonition in the *Lord*: to frequent the *Ordinances*, and to owne *Jesus Christ* by an externall profession. If he could but contrive to prevent their comming *into* that engagement, hee might hope more easily to *keep* them out when they are grown up, than to *work* them out (so growne up) to a renouncing of *Christianity*, which yet hee has brought *some* unto. But this referres to the *next*.

10. That *there ought not to be any Nationall Church under the Gospell.* The great *quarrell* against the *Baptizing* of *children*, is but in order to *this*, that *Nationall Churches* may bee *dissolved*. Then which, what more contrary to Gods declared Intentions? *I will give thee* (saith the *Father* to the *Messiah*) the *Nations for thine Inheritance.* (*Psalme* 2.8.) And *all Nations shall flow unto it. Isa.* 3.2. And *in that day, shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria—whom the Lord of Hosts shall blesse, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people* (not, *my people of Egypt*) and *Assyria the worke of mine hands, and Israel mine Inheritance.* (Were not they to bee as Israel was?) And accordingly *Jesus Christ* commands and commissioneth his Disciples, *Matth.* 28. 19. *Goe, and Disciple all Nations, Baptizing,* * *and Teaching them, &c.* But the *Devill* doth at no hand *like* of this. But, whereas *Gods* great *worke* is *to Church the world*, (which in *Christ* he hath been *reconciling* to himselfe,*) the *Devils* counter-worke is, *to Heathenize the Church.* Gods Commission is, to engage all we may, *to* the knowledge and

* Christ bids, Baptize all Nations, and yet they would make a wonderment of a Baptized Nation.

* 2 Cor. 5. 19.

and profeſſion of his *Truth*: but *Satans* plot is to *drive out* as many as he can *from* the Truth, and *Chriſt* himſelfe (if he could) out of the world, that ſo himſelfe (and *Antichriſt* his Vicegerent) may be *Lord* paramount, and ſuit his *Juriſdiction* to his *Title*; The *God of this world*, 2 *Cor.* 4 4.

11. *That to eſtabliſh any one Religion*, (although it were true) *is a great Tyranny and Oppreſſion: but to give liberty for all Religions is juſt, and equall.* Would yee know the true *Intention* of this *pretence*? It is ſurely this; *Pernicies multiplicata capitalior eſt, & nocentior quam ſola*. Et, quæ non proſunt ſingula, multa juvent.* It is much more for the *Intereſt* of Satan that *all* manner of falſe Religions be *tolerated*, then that any *one* falſe Religion be *eſtabliſhed*; That ſo by *all* meanes he may take *ſome**. For hee is not *practically* guilty of that Errour (himſelfe) of reſolving every thing into the Eternall *Decrees* of God (though he knowes well enough, that what is *decreed* muſt be *effected*) but moſt indefatigably applyes himſelfe to the uſe of *Meanes*. And knowing the *Diſpoſitions* of men to be very *divers*, and in many things *contrary*, would have ſomewhat wherewith to ſuit and humour *every ones* appetite and *luſt*.

Guicciardin. Hyppomn. Polit.

* He knowes how to raiſe *perſecution* againſt the *Truth* Indirectly afterwards by ſundry *pretences*: as wofull experience is like to witnes.

12. *That Chriſtians ſhould not fixe and ſettle upon any thing in Religion: for* (ſay they) *yee know not where God may be at his next remove.* Either the *Apoſtle Peter* (and others alike inſpired) were much *miſtaſten*, or *this* is very *falſe* and *damnable*. See 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. *Yee therefore Brethren*: ——*beware leſt yee alſo being led away with the errour of the wicked, fall from your owne ſtedfaſtneſſe. Gods* worke is to ground, *ſtabliſh*, ſtrengthen and *ſettle* his People in the Truth, and to prejudice them againſt evill. But the *Devils* buſineſſe is, to worke us to an *indifferency* to *all* Religions, *till* we are outed of the *True*, and *then* this *Bridg* muſt be broken *downe*, and by pretence of ſome *extraordinary Rule* from *Revelation* or *Providence*, His Inſtruments will trie to ſettle us upon ſome one *that* is *falſe*, or to tolerate *all* but the *Truth*.

13. Wee might yet deſcend deeper, and truely report how ſome of his Inſtruments expreſly *deny the Godhead and Satiſfaction*

faction of Chriſt. Yea and ſome horridly *deny* and *ſcorne* all that is written in the holy *Scriptures.*

14 *That the Church is to be viſibly victorious and ſuperior to the world.* And when *Providence* hath poſſeſſed any of *Power* and *Advantages*, they ought to keep and make them good.

15. That *there is no True Church or Ordinances now in being upon earth*: Or, as others, *that there is no being of the true Church*, unleſſe in that which they call a particular-*Church-way*; that is, by *gathering Churches out of Churches.*

16. *Ubi res poſtulat fides & pacta poſthabeantur*: that the moſt ſolemne *Obligations* may bee throwne *off*, when *Providence* urgeth with ſome conceived *Neceſſity*; and when men by ſo doing may preſent themſelves ſome faire *advantage* or *ſecurity.* And that which hath been judged worthy of Death in *others*, may bee done by *themſelves* for good ends.

17. *That there is no Originall of Power or Authority in the world but the Sword.*

Theſe are but a *few* of many that are now adayes *whetted* upon the ſpirits of ſuch as are diſpoſed to receive them: The ſad *Influence* of which, upon the *judgement* and *Practiſe* of men wee muſt not *here* enlarge to *demonſtrate* in particulars. Being *enforced* not onely to *contract this* matter in *hand*, but to exhibit a meere *Skeleton* (and ſcarcely that) of the other halfe of the *Obſervations* that here ſhould *follow.*

The

The *VII.* Obſervation.

That he endeavour's to implant and ſettle theſe ſoule-deſtroy-ing Principles in the Conſciences *of men.* Whereby,

1. The ſoule is *prejudiced* againſt all *ſenſe* of the *evill* that is in them: and entertaines with ſuſpition and *diſtaſte*, whatſoever tends to *oppoſe* them.

2. The Perſon is *ingaged* to act more *vigorouſly* and *zealouſly*, to maintaine and propagate ſuch Principles: They are bound in *Conſcience* to doe it. And men will Sacrifice their *lives* for their *Conſcience*.

3. Hereby Satan *credits* his buſineſſe (in the hands of his Inſtruments) with the plauſible notion of *Duty*, and *Neceſſity*: of doing God good *ſervice*, (in the things whereby they moſt diſhonour him, and ſtrongly promote the Devills *Intereſt*.)—It is their *Conſcience*.

4. And queſtionleſſe it *doubles* his *content*, to ſee how handſomly his Plot *ſucceeds*, to *ruine* Religion under *pretence* of Tranſcendent improvements in *Religion*: and to deſtroy *Conſcience* by *Conſcience*; to ſee poore ſoules doe his worke *devoutly*, and Sacrifice their endeavours to his *Service*, as the true God.

The *VIII.* Obſervation.

LEſt theſe, or any other *Stratagems* of his, ſhould at any time be *diſcovered* and *oppoſed*, by any reall, vigorous, and ſincerely-intended *Reformation*; He hath of late brought forth a *New*-Device (ſcarce ever heard of before in the world:) viz. *to exempt, priviledge, and for-ever to ſecure his Agents and Brokers,* (The Seminaries and Teachers of ſuch ſoule-murdering Doctrines) *from being moleſted, diſcouraged or diſturb'd in his worke, by any Government or Diſcipline, Eccleſiaſticall*

or Civill. And this Privilege to be *Univerſall* and *Perpetuall*; to be eſtabliſhed at *once* for All, without *Example* or *Experience.* This was a Grand contrivance indeed, (to be ſeene more at large in the late *Agreement of the People*:) wherein yet hee ſeems to be over-reacht by *ſome*, who have made uſe of that *Inſtrument* to ſerve their *owne* Turnes. And yet hee wants not thoſe that retaines the ſame *Principles*, and carry on the ſame *Intereſt. viz.* Utterly to *aboliſh* all *Magiſtracy*; or at leaſt ſo to *bind* their hands (or rather to *cut* them quite *off*) that they may never bee able to ſerve that *God* (whoſe Vicegerents they *ought* to bee, and whoſe Power they *repreſent*) in the *Protection* or *Propagation* of His *Goſpel*; or in defence of his univerſally-allowed *Rights*, from the Barbarous and Savage *Aſſaults* of Monſtrous men.

The *IX.* Obſervation.

THat *Satan*, (the more effectually to *ſecure* his *Inſtruments* from diſturbance in his buſineſſe, as alſo to *deprive* the *Truth* and faithfull people of God of all *Protection*, and expoſe them to *Perſecution*) *labours to turne aſide the Princes and Civill Powers of the World, from knowing and following their true and proper Intereſt. And inſted thereof, to engage them in ſuch Deſignes, as make more for the Devils advantage, than their owne, or the Nations under their Power: and which are inconſiſtent with the true Intereſt of Chriſtianity.*

By this *Stratagem* Hee hath often raiſed great *Perſecutions* againſt the *Church* and faithfull ſervants of *Chriſt*, Indirectly, and by conſequence. That they may not have ſo much as the glorious *reputation* of *ſuffering* for a good *Conſcience*, but may bee oppreſſed and perſecuted, under the notion of *ſullen, Factious, Seditious* perſons. Thus was *Jeroboam* fool'd, when God for the ſinnes of *Prince* and *People* rent the Ten Tribes from *Solomons* houſe; and divolved the Government upon this

upſtart.

upſtart. Upon that occaſion many of Gods people were conſtrayned to *flye* the Countrey. But it was the deſtruction of this over-witty unwiſe *Politician*. Under this pretence they crucified the *Lord Jeſus*. But their *Government* was not long-liv'd after it. The *Lord* prevent the like *practice* and proceedings of *Satan* and his *Inſtruments* (wicked and *Jeſuiticall* ſpirits) that have *long* * traveld with *Deſignes* of this Nature againſt the *Truth* and *Churches* of Chriſt in this *Nation*; that they may not *now* boaſt themſelves, and ſay, *Aha, ſo would we have it*. Surely *great* is the *Danger* of *this*, at this *preſent*: But yet the *Almighty*, whom wee cannot *finde out* in his Excellency of *Power* and *Judgement*, may *ſo ſeale up the hands* [and open the Hearts] *of men, that they may know his worke*. And ſo ſenſibly *incorporate* and wrap-up the true Goſpell-*Intereſt*, with that of the *Nation*, and the Authority or *Government* thereof, that they who from *Religious* Principles *cannot*, or *doe* not, yet from *Reaſon* and *Self-love* may be conſtrained, to *abandon* all improper *Engagements*, and fall-in with the concernments of *Jeſus Chriſt*: ſeeking their *own* preſervation in the well-fare and protection of his *Church* and *People*. It is the *Privilege* and *Security* of *Princes* to bee the *Churches* Patrons. For *thoſe that honour me I will honour*, (ſaith the King of Kings) *and they that deſpiſe mee ſhall be lightly eſteemed*. And how this is to be *underſtood* himſelf tells us, *Matth.* 25. 45.

* See *Romes Maſterpiece*, p. 30.

Job 37. 23. and v. 7.

The *X.* Obſervation.

THat *Satan* to carry on the whole frame of his Deſignes the more proſperouſly *makes choice of Inſtruments moſt fit to ſerve his turnes, and to goe through with his undertakings*. And they are uſually thus qualified.

1. *Of capacity ſufficient to receive his ſtrongeſt impulſions*, and deepeſt *impreſſions*. Of a *Spongy* nature, running *out* * after *Novelties*; ſuch will draw in boldly all his *Infuſi-*

* Jude 11. τῇ πλάνῃ ἐξεχύθησαν. *They were powred out after* Errour.

ons,

ons (under any tolerable colour) be they against *Reason* or *Religion*.

2. Of *capacity* and judgement *not so deep* or *solid* as to *discerne his Ends*, or fathome his *Depths* and Intentions: as indeed, * *who is sufficient for these things?* He *beguiled* our *first* Parents, whilst yet their naturall powers were *entire* and unviolated.

3. Of *Hearts not so meek and humble as to acknowledge an errour*: or to throw off unworthy *engagements* of *Custome, Interest, Expectations, &c.*

4. Of *Dispositions Resolute, Active, Fierce, Vain-glorious, Restlesse, Busie, Bold, Talkative.* And sometimes againe, *Reserved, Secret, Selfe-commanding, Subtile, Insinuating, Vigilant* and *Indefatigable Spirits**. Every way fit for the *part* hee allots them, bee it to *Consult*, or *Execute, &c. Cunning* Cheats, full of *slights* and *craftinesse*, Eph. 4. 12.

5. Such as are *qualified* with some *advantages* that may *credit* and *further* his *Designes*: as being,

1. Of *reputation for godlinesse*. This workes upon *Conscience*. The ministers of *Satan* prevaile *much* when they are *transformed* into the Ministers of *Righteousnesse*. But much *more* when they *are* Godly indeed. For as we hunt *Beasts* with *Beasts*, and kill *Birds* with *Birds*, so doth Satan catch *Soules* with *Soules*: and this is most *dangerous* when they are of unquestioned Integrity: for such carry a great *stroak* with them. (*a*)

2. Of *Eminency for publick service*; that have deserved well of the Publick. This works upon *Ingenuity* and good *Nature*. (*b*)

3. Of *Power, Office*, or *Employment*, whether *Military, Civill, Academicall, Ecclesiasticall, Oeconomicall, &c.* This workes upon mens *Interests, Hopes, Feares, Disadvantages*: especially if also managed with *Subtilty*. *Multa novit vulpes, sed Echinus unum magnum.*

But of all *Enginiers* that the Devill employes, there are none that have given such proofe of their Sufficiency and Activity in his Service as the *Jesuits*; who sheltring themselves under

* Jude 9. 2 Cor. 10. 12. and 11. 12.

† 2 Tim. 3. 3, 4

* Such as may bee bold enough to *Preach, Dispute*, (in their way) and raise clamours against Religion.

a Nullo hominis facilius decipiuntur quàm ab eo qui decipere nunquam solitus fuit, &c. Guicciardin. *Nec alius pronior fidei lapsus, quàm ubi vel falsæ gravis Auctor exitit.* Plin.

b Upon this Advantage *Sejanus* play'd his game of Ambition. For having rais'd himselfe a reputation with *Cæsar* by former good services, *Quanquam exitiosa suadebat, non sui anxius, cum fide audiebatur.* Tacit.

under manifold *disguises* (yet all reducible to foure * *Orders*) have contrived, i. formed, and acted all those *Factions*, whereby all parts of *Christendome* have been *shaken*. For whose sakes I could wish my selfe a little more *Paper-roome*: but shall referre the *Reader* to a serious survey of that *large Discoverie of that Plot and Treason against the King, Kingdome and Protestant Religion, and to raise the Scottish Warres*: Which yee have in *Romes-Master-piece*. Which Hints many things of *vast* concernment, however the *Interessed* have endeavour'd to *slight it*.

* 1. *Ecclesiasticks.*
2. *Politicians.*
3. *Seculars.*
4 *Intelligencers.*
Romes Master-piece. p. 14. See also Sir *Eawin Sandys Europæ speculum.*

Other Instruments he also hath, that have been of late eminently serviceable to the same (though it may be *subordinate* to the Former,) interest concerning whom there are many *Secrets*; not so much because *impossible* to *know*, as because not so *safe* or *fit* to *utter*. But *adverse parties* may pursue the *same ends*: *Pompey* and *Cæsar* were mortall *enemies*, yet but *Rivalls* in one and the same *Designe*, which was to heighten their Greatnesse, by enslaving the *Common-wealth*. *Cæsar* went the downe-right way, and declared *openly* what hee intended. The other more *Disguised* his Designe; practising (by infinite secret Engines) to cast the *State* into an Absolute *Anarchy* and *Confusion*, that the *State* might cast it selfe into *his* Armes for Protection; and so the Soveraigne Power be divolved upon *him* (and *hee* never seen in it) under the pretence of *rescuing* the *Liberty* of the *People* out of the Hands of *Cæsar*. This is the case (just) between the *Papists* and the *Universallists* (that are for all Religions.) The *Reader* may apply it more at *large*.

The XI. Obſervation.

THat *Satan*, leſt he ſhould be foyl'd and diſappointed any more (as he hath been often) in ſuch, his practiſes by the faithfulneſſe, diligence and Activity of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, *labours (by many ſtrange and ſubtile Engines) to break and ruine the whole Miniſtery.* In order whereunto he hath made large *Preparations*; and is exceeding buſie by all ſorts of Inſtruments, (*Atheiſts, Papiſts*, and *Sectaries*) to *vilifie*, diſhonour and *diſcourage* that high and honourable *Function*; Making uſe not onely of their profeſſed *Enemies*, but even of their *friends*, and *themſelves* too, in *ſome* caſes, and of manifold Emergent-*Providences*, to raiſe *advantages* to this *undertaking*. Which yet hee was never able to goe *through-with*, but hath *ſplit* many of his *Inſtruments* upon this Rock. It being an *Ordinance* of *Chriſt*, which God hath fixed as a *defenced City*, *an Iron Pillar, and Brazen Wall*, againſt *All* that have *fought* againſt it *.

* Jer. 1. 18, 19

And, in purſuance of this *Deſigne*, He opens a foule wide mouth againſt the ſetled *meanes* of their *maintenance*, and againſt *Humane Learning* *. Hath alſo prevailed to remove the *Lawes* that required attendance upon publick *Ordinances*, &c. But may wee have leave to propound this *Queſtion*, to thoſe that (in *ſome* caſes) pretend to extract marvellous *Diſcoveries* from *Providence*: *Was it ever knowne that thoſe that ſet themſelves to perſecute the faithfull Miniſters of Chriſt, proſpered?* Their *ſinnes* may be *declared* againſt their *Graces* may be *exerciſed*: but enquire whether ever any that ſet themſelves againſt them, *proſpered*.

* This was the Apoſtat *Iulians* ſubtile Stratagem. But the *Lord* rebuked him.

The

The *XII.* Obſervation:

HOw *Satan frameth manifold Diverſions, of all faithfull* Miniſters *and People of God, from their maine and principall worke: filling up their thoughts and Time with troubleſome, empty, fruitleſſe knots and ſnarles, concerning things meerely Civill; or remote and unprofitable Queſtions referring to Religion.* Empty, fooliſh, provoking *Pamphlets, not worth* the Reading, or *Anſwering*, and yet *too unworthy* to bee altogether neglected and *unanſwered, &c.* Whereby the *Study* of more *profitable* things, more immediately concerning the *Glory* of *God*, and the true *Edification* of *Soules* in Faith and Love which is in *Chriſt Ieſus*, is exceedingly prevented and *interrupted.*

Theſe ſix laſt things are but the *Heads* (and ſcarcely that) of what ſhould have been more largely *diſcourſed* of. But happy may he be, who being better *able*, may alſo more *conveniently* and *ſucceſſefully* undertake them.

FINIS.